FORUM
Vol. CX No. 5

Between East and West

IV. *Karl Renner*

Last in a series of portraits of European Socialists

By FREDERICK H. CRAMER
Professor of History, Mount Holyoke College

I

THIRTY-FOUR years ago in August, 1914, the end of one of the world's great historical periods was at hand. The first continent which in the history of man had succeeded in establishing its control directly or indirectly over almost the entire surface of the planet exploded in the first of a series of fratricidal eruptions. Its five major powers, Great Britain, Russia, Germany, France, and Austria-Hungary, joint partners in Europe's world hegemony, were at each other's throats.

Since then events have taken their irrevocable course. Today only one of those five powers, Russia, a half-European power at best, has survived the suicidal battle between Europe's giants. Only *L'Europe outre mer,* the United States, has remained able to challenge Russia's claims to world control. The dispute over the legacy of the fallen European world-empire is the true historical issue between East and West today. In this struggle, the Eastern states have been sacrificed to Russia, and their puppet governments profess allegiance to the Kremlin's banner.

It is no accident, however, that at this juncture the battle for Austria, rump-Austria one should say, is second in importance only to the battle for Germany. It has been maintained, and probably rightly, that the old defunct Austria-Hungary of 1914, with all its shortcomings and obsolete institutions, was superior to any political and economic set-up which has since taken its place. One might even go so far as to say that the dissolution of that venerable Empire was the historic prerequisite for the partition of Europe into an Eastern and Western zone. For feeble though it had become, the old Hapsburg Empire had always stood firmly on the side of the West, containing, jointly with Germany, the Eastern and Southeastern powers of Europe, i.e. that very zone which (except for a contested border area reaching from Finland through the Baltic states and Poland to the Black Sea) had throughout its history been subjected to profound Asiatic influences.

The ascent of Hitler Germany paved the way for a great duel for control of this area. Hitler Germany won the lion's share. By the summer of 1939, Hitler was in undisputed control of Austria and Czechoslovakia, and was reaching over into such adjacent ex-Hapsburg territories as South Tyrol and Hungary and casting a covetous glance upon Poland, including Polish Galicia with its fine oil wells. Stalin was able to wrest the latter section from Hitler's grasp in the Polish partition agreement of 1939. He may have hoped for even greater spoils than the Baltic States and Eastern Poland, when Hitler's rapacity forced England and France into

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

World War II. The fall of France in 1940 disillusioned Moscow on that score, and Hitler's invasion of the sacred red soil made a postponement of the struggle for the Central European area inevitable.

The entry of the United States into World War II was a boon for Stalin in more ways than one. American Lend-Lease aid had already begun to flow eastward before Pearl Harbor, but its dimensions increased by leaps and bounds thereafter. The obvious weight of American military and naval strength in the Allied councils favored Russia. For in lieu of the British, who knew the wiles of the Russian bear in any disguise, the American innocents abroad could be expected to walk where angels feared to tread. Specifically, the abandonment of the Balkan invasion in favor of the Italian ill-starred venture was an American "victory" over British counsels. It was the first major step towards handing over Central and South Eastern Europe to Stalin. In the closing days of World War II, President Roosevelt, exemplifying the fine American tradition of roseate optimism in the realm of international affairs, handed most of Central Europe to Stalin on a silver platter at Yalta, and soon afterwards Mr. Truman underwrote his predecessor's policy at Potsdam.

The only exception to this magnificent generosity with other people's territories and ways of life was rump-Austria. The foreign ministers had agreed, in the halcyon days of East-West friendship, that Austria should be severed from Germany and should be revived as a sovereign state. Fortunately, Western troops occupied two-thirds of the country when it was "liberated." The Russians, however, held eastern Austria except for Vienna, where, as in the case of Berlin, a Four-Power enclave was established within the Russian zone of occupation. In one important respect, Austria's treatment differed from that accorded Germany: as a liberated country, Austria was permitted to establish a government of her own. The subsequent elections provided a parliamentary basis for the provisional government and showed the utter weakness of Communist sympathies among the voters. Ever since that time, the Russians have balked under one pretext after another at the conclusion of a peace treaty under whose terms the country, already liberated from the German's, would also be liberated from its liberators. Because of her strategic location, Austria has now become one of the chief fronts in the cold war between East and West. The overwhelming majority of the people would willingly opt for the West. How far they may be able to express their wishes, however, remains to be seen. Confronted with four occupation armies, a country of some seven million people (almost half of whom live in Vienna) has a difficult time at best trying to make its own voice heard.

In one respect, at least, Austria is fortunate. There is at the helm of the little revived state 77-year old Dr. Karl Renner, the first head of rump-Austria in 1918, and now the first *Bundespraesident* of the newborn republic. Like Benes, who was among the leaders of the first and second Czechoslovak republics, Renner belongs to that intellectual stratum of progressives for which the moribund Hapsburg Empire seems to have been an excellent breeding ground. While Benes had the more spectacular career, Renner (who remained almost unknown in the international councils of Europe) confined himself largely to the Austro-German orbit, at least until 1918. In the present struggle between East and West, Renner has become one of the men to watch. Of all countries of the former Hapsburg monarchy, his little Austria alone has managed to remain in the Western camp. So far this has been largely due to two factors: the presence of American, British, and French troops, and the anti-Communist sentiment of most Austrians. To perpetuate the latter is one of Renner's chief problems, especially since he is by nature a progressive. He is little inclined to buy political support at the price of encouraging the strong reactionary tendencies among a large section of Austria's population. A sketch of Renner, the man and his work, seems of some use at a time when American foreign policy in Central Europe can count upon only a shrinking number of supporters in that area.

II

The hurricane-like rapidity with which modern Europe has been hurled from the pinnacle of world-power is well illustrated by

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the very chronology of Renner's life. Born on December 14, 1870, at Untertannowitz in Moravia, like Benes the son of a peasant, he would, by birth, belong to the Czechoslovak Republic. Yet Hapsburg Austria at the time did not confine its native sons to so narrow an area. A change of domicile from one end of the empire to the other, from the Adriatic to Galicia, from Transylvania to the Tyrol was easily feasible.

In those December days some more nails were being hammered into the coffin of Austria-Hungary. Outside the closely besieged French capital the final preparations were made for the imminent proclamation of the new German empire under Prussian leadership. The crowning success of Bismarck's life-work left the Austro-Germans not only outside the new framework but, in separating them after a thousand years of political affinity from the mass of Germans, sharply accentuated their minority role within the remaining Austro-Hungarian empire. The Dual Monarchy of Austro-Hungary, as constituted in 1867-68, was the political house into which Renner was born.

Even in the United States, the traditional land of opportunity, it is unusual to see a farmer's boy go forth to capture an LL.D. Yet in the reign of Francis Joseph, bad though it may have been in many respects, farm-boys could and did receive a higher education, if circumstances warranted it, and went forth to the universities of the empire. For those interested in more than purely academic matters Vienna, the grand old capital, was of course an irresistable magnet, and so Karl Renner went to Vienna. There the imperial parliament, the *Reichsrat*, met.

Young Renner soon fell in with the rising movement of Austrian socialism. Of an independent frame of mind, he refused to swallow official party doctrine obediently when it went counter to his own interpretation of Marxism. A growing list of publications on various political and ideological problems familiarized the Austrian workers, but also to a growing extent Austrian intellectuals, with the political and economic views of Renner. In 1907, at the age of 36, he was elected to the *Reichsrat;* as "director" of the library he distinguished himself. With men like Adler, Renner came to be considered one of the intellectual leaders of Austrian socialism, which, among the European chapters of that movement, became conspicuous for its independence, initiative, and political ability. The results of such leadership were to be seen with particular clarity after 1918.

Among the practical results of his activities in the *Reichsrat,* Renner could list the adoption of a bill co-sponsored by him, which provided for the building of 100,000 "people's apartments" over a period of years not to exceed the year 1921. Considering the fact that the Austrian Social-Democrats had only 87 votes against 429 of all other parties, one must view the victory of this legislation as Renner's first conspicuous success in enlisting non-partisan support for his projects. Incidentally those 100,000 apartments were to be built for $80 million, i.e. at a unit cost of $800 per apartment. This, in terms of pre-1914 prices, was enough for plain but not shoddy building. The execution of at least part of the program after World War I provided Vienna with some of the finest specimens of cheap, yet architecturally attractive and technically modern, housing whose novel features attracted city-planners from all over the world.

The outbreak of World War I practically destroyed the Second International. Renner's own party was no exception in rallying to the national cause. The internationalism which Renner in his little essay, "The Worker and Nationalism," had advocated was at least temporarily abandoned. Actually it was never revived within the Second International. Meanwhile the problems of the disintegrating Dual Monarchy became more pressing as time went on. Throughout his writings (which included, for instance, "State and Parliament," 1914, and "The Self-determination of Nations. Its special application to Austria," 1918), he had always warned against a short-sighted breaking up of the economic and political unity of the old Empire. He foresaw only too clearly the pitiful result of substituting a number of smallish nationalist states for the larger unity represented in Austria-Hungary. As a Socialist he had no sympathy for nationalist localism, but, on the other hand, he recognized the dire need for equal treatment of all groups within the Empire. The dis-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

criminatory practice of German-Hungarian domination had, of course, to go. Yet the salvation of the imperial unity seemed well worth fighting for. Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that Renner enjoyed a unique measure of respect not only in his own party, but among a large number of non-Socialist progressive Austrians as well.

The military and political collapse of the Hapsburg regime in the fall of 1918 saw Renner, whose influence in bringing about the end of the monarchic regime had been considerable, at the head of the provisional republican government. The Austrian government soon found itself confined to the rump-Austrian territory; Hungary and Czechoslovakia proclaimed their independence; Galicia joined Poland; Croatia went into partnership with Serbia; and the Irrendenta (plus South Tyrol) was annexed by Italy. The first elections for the new little Austrian National Assembly gave a substantial majority to a coalition of Socialists and Christian-Socialists (Catholic right-of-center men). Renner became the first Chancellor of the Austrian Republic.

He was immediately confronted with a staggering task. Political and economic reconstruction proved almost impossible. Rump-Austria, whose capital Vienna contained (as has been said) almost half of the entire population, saw herself cut off by political and economic barriers from those very areas which hitherto had been the chief buyers of her industrial products and the chief suppliers of her agricultural needs. Even after the eventual re-establishment of a stable currency, Austria's economy remained in a highly precarious state. Hitler, after annexing the country in 1938, undertook a forcible expansion of Austria's productive facilities, especially in the oil and steel industries, for the benefit of his war machine.

In the political sphere, the liquidation of the Hapsburg monarchy was one of Renner's chief tasks. In March, 1919, the dethroned emperor Charles VII left the country forever. The prerogatives of the Austrian aristocracy were abolished. The centrifugal tendencies of the various parts of rump-Austria were successfully combated. The constitution finally adopted gave some leeway to the *Länder* but did not impair the centralization of control in the hand of the *Bundesregierung* at Vienna.

The radicalism shown by the Austrian Social-Democrats proved one of the chief reasons for the weakness of Communist dissidentism, a fact especially noteworthy in a country whose economic plight in the years after 1918 should by all normal standards have provided an ideal breeding ground for communism. Yet from 1918 to the present the Communists have never been able to make any impressive showing in Austria. Renner's policies during those crucial years must be held partly responsible. His innate sense of political decency, a rare phenomenon at all times, led to the decline of his power and finally to his ouster. Ironically enough, the Hungarian Communists can take credit for that. When their regime in Hungary was overthrown and replaced by a reactionary one, scores of Communists sought refuge in Austria. The Christian-Socialists, up in arms against the anticlerical and sanguinary actions of the defunct Communist regime in Hungary, favored extraditing those refugees to the vengeance of political enemies. Renner and his fellow Social-Democrats, on the other hand, defended the right of political asylum. The government coalition broke up, and after a brief transition period as Foreign Minister in a "proportional cabinet," Renner resigned on October 22, 1920.

Although he remained important in the councils of the Austrian Social-Democrats, his genteel nineteenth-century approach did not seem to fit the rough exigencies of our enlightened century, and gradually he withdrew more and more to his study to devote his time to theoretical rather than actual political labors. Meanwhile, the Austria whose peace delegation he had headed at St. Germain began to glide imperceptibly at first, more rapidly later, towards the right until Catholic fascism versus German National Socialism became the only apparent alternatives. In contrast to their pre-1914 role, the Austrian Social-Democrats now suffered increasingly from a dearth of leadership which made them more and more ineffectual in Austrian political life, until, after the sanguinary repression of their party, they assumed the ridiculous role

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of dispassionate bystander in the tussle between Austro-fascism and German National Socialism.

III

For an understanding of Austria's chances in her present battle against being drawn into the red vortex, one must know something of the strange political groupings of her voting population. There is an almost even distribution between the urban and rural, but the urban vote is concentrated in a few cities, chiefly in Vienna, Steyr, Graz, Klagenfurt, and Linz. In the cities, the left vote was overwhelmingly cast for the Austrian Social-Democratic Party, which had remained sufficiently "leftist" to hold the labor vote against all Communist assaults even in the post-World War I period. As in Switzerland, where for reasons of general prosperity communism never took hold, there was no perceptible rise in Communist strength in Austria between 1918 and 1938. On the other hand, of course, the strength of the Austrian Social-Democrats, who always came near to polling half of the total vote, was so impressive that they came to be cast in the part of "the red menace" by the Austrian rightists.

Names of political parties in Europe are as meaningless for the most part as in the United States. In Austria the moderate conservatives rallied to the standard of the so-called *Christlich-Soziale Partei* (usually referred to misleadingly in English as the "Christian-Socialist Party.") It was based on Catholicism, whose social and economic program it tried to foster. In an overwhelmingly Catholic country like Austria, it soon drew the large rural vote besides having a fairly strong following among the non-labor urban population. Although there were several small parties both to the right of the C.S.P. and to the left of the Social-Democrats, the strength of those two parties was such as to make rump-Austria practically a two-party state.

The blessings of the two-party system have been extolled so loudly and so often that it is well to remember the Austrian example, where the two-party system led to the disintegration of the entire political fabric of the country. As the 1920's came to an end, the rift between the erstwhile partners in government had become so deep that "red Vienna," the Social-Democratic citadel, had become one of the favorite targets of C.S.P. hostility. In that city, indeed, the Socialists carried every municipal election by heavy majorities. They ruled Vienna, i.e. half of Austria's population, in a thoroughly democratic and exemplary manner. Their social welfare work, their housing program, their new parks, and popular swimming pools attracted admiring visitors from all over the world. They demonstrated the functioning of evolutionary socialism at its best. Nothing certainly was further from their minds than a revolutionary coup and the setting up of a "proletarian dictatorship." Yet the conflict between the national government, dominated by now by the C.S.P., and the proud metropolis, headed by the venerable Socialist mayor Dr. Seitz, who himself had become a veritable institution, began to deepen in the early 1930's.

The bane of unemployment, the rise of National-socialism across the Austrian border, and the growth of a virulent National-socialist movement in Austria combined to drive the worried C.S.P., whose guiding gray eminence for years had been father Seipel, to seek rightist support by a stiffer anti-Socialist policy and to gain foreign aid against the Nazi menace of the *Anschluss* by an alliance with Mussolini. There certainly was no love lost between the C.S.P. and Hitler's minions, but, on the other hand, the average Austrian (including the Socialists) was firmly opposed to a tie-up with Italy, partly on account of the unforgotten rape of Austrian South Tyrol, partly (as in the case of the Social Democrats) on account of enmity to fascism. It was a suicidal foreign policy, therefore, which the benighted Dollfuss regime inaugurated after Hitler came to power.

Renner had spent those years chiefly as an observer. From his desk came a number of publications, the most important of which perhaps was his "Economic Life As a Whole and Socialization" (1924). Although professing to do no more than render Marx's economic program in a popular version, Renner went far beyond that, frankly admitting that Marx had not known or overlooked a number of vital economic processes, especially the distributive and self-regulatory character of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

modern economic institutions. The actual development of history, therefore, had not been, Renner pointed out correctly, the growth of an enormous proletariat on one side, and the survival of but a few super-capitalists on the other, but the survival or even creation of an amazingly strong middle class which, while being capitalist, showed little or none of the sinister traits ascribed to capitalists by orthodox Marxism. Apart from such heretical views, Renner continued to remain influential in the flourishing "cooperatives" which, without being socialistic in the slightest degree, have managed in many parts of Europe to bridge the gap between agricultural producers and urban consumers to the benefit of both.

In the 1937 *Who's Who in Central and Eastern Europe,* one finds a somewhat melancholy series of entries under Renner's name such as "Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of Austrian Cooperatives, retired," "President of the former Workers' Bank." The clue to the impressive list of offices no longer held by Renner, who at the time this article went to press was barely 77 and in good health, is the political death of his beloved party, the Social-Democrats. Their suppression was part of Mussolini's price for his support of the C.S.P. regime which he rightly hoped to turn into an Austrian replica of his Italian brand of fascism. In the futile hope of forestalling the nazification of Austria by turning against Marxism, the Dollfuss regime early in 1934 forcibly dissolved the Socialist organizations. In Vienna this wholly illegal and crudely handled policy led to desperate armed resistance on the part of the workers whose unorganized and ill-equipped forces were soon crushed by the weight of Austria's regular army and police. "Red Vienna" was no longer red, at least not on the surface. From then on, men like Renner lived in "retirement." If Dollfuss had hoped to save Austria from Hitler by acting as the Austrian slayer of the Marxist dragon, he was soon undeceived. A few months after the suppression of the Socialists, he himself lay bleeding to death in his own office in Vienna, reaping the whirlwind where he had sown the storm.

It bespeaks the political wisdom of the Austrian Socialists, now driven underground, that even in the years between 1934 and 1938 they offered time and again to assist the very regime which had felled their movement in a struggle against the rising danger of a Hitler-worked *Anschluss*. It should also be remembered that these very Socialists themselves had at one time been ardent supporters of an *Anschluss*. That was when Germany, as well as Austria, seemed embarked on a common political course as new-born democracies in 1919. By 1934, however, *Anschluss* could only mean for Austria the substitution of Hitlerian totalitarianism for a still relatively gentle Austro-fascism and all its works. It bespeaks the benighted frame of mind of the doomed C.S.P. petty tyrants that until the very last they turned down those offers, even though the record of Austria's Social-Democrats was one of successful opposition to communism.

In consequence, the sullen Socialists, comprising almost half of the total population, stood aside when Hitler's armies swept into Austria in March, 1938. The pious fiction of an unwilling Austria having been raped by good old Adolf may be useful for the niceties on which the revival of an independent Austria has been based. Actually about half of the population was actively or passively ready for Hitler's coup, the remainder was given no chance by the Nazi-infested Austrian cabinet which the hare-brained Schuschnigg led into unconditional surrender. To give its ignominious end the final ironical touch, its much-sought friend Mussolini did not lift a finger to save his Austro-fascist puppets.

In the seven years which elapsed between annexation and "liberation," Hitler, the native Austrian, did his best to obliterate all traces of her former existence. The name Austria vanished. Henceforth Austria was once more, as a thousand years earlier, merely the *Ostmark* (Eastern March) of Hitler's new Unholy Roman Empire. The Austrian Nazis for the most part found their claims to reward and office pushed aside, German Nazis being preferred for the administration of the annexed territory. In World War II hundreds of thousands of Austrians fought willingly and often enthusiastically on every German front, from North Africa and the English Channel coast to the Caucasus. Many paid with their lives, others were taken prisoner. Of those who fell into Russian hands, the larger part never

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

returned. Yet at Moscow in 1943 the Allied ministers proclaimed that Austria was to be reborn after the war.

For the events which, in the wake of the military liberation, led to the actual revival of an Austrian state and an Austrian government, we have a classic of contemporary historiography, the little-known Memorandum concerning the history of the Austrian Declaration of Independence, published in Vienna in June, 1945, within a few weeks after the events took place. It was reprinted early in 1946 in Zurich with substantial additions, including another memorandum of August, 1945, and a number of official documents.

With great simplicity, Renner outlines in these memoranda the course of events from the Russian entry into his retreat at Gloggnitz on April 1, 1945, to his being recognized as the head of the provisional government of a second democratic Austrian Republic. Students of contemporary history would do well to compare the quiet, almost academic style of this eyewitness account with the flamboyant froth of journalese dealing with the surface of the very same events.

Now *Bundespraesident* of Austria, Renner heads the same coalition which in 1918 formed the Austrian government. It consists of the Social-Democrats, again almost half of the total representation, and the reborn C.S.P., which at the polls gained slightly more votes than its great rival. The Communists, reentering the political race, garnered only a handful of seats, a defeat all the more galling, since it occurred while more than one third of Austrian territory was under Red Army occupation.

The chief task of Renner and his aides is, of course, to obtain the withdrawal of Allied troops whose expenses have to be borne by the bankrupt Austrian state. The conclusion of the so-called *Staatsvertrag,* a mixture of peace-treaty and international statute guaranteeing Austrian independence, has had to be postponed time and again because of Russian obstructionism. For one thing, Austrian occupation gave the Russians the excuse of keeping Red Army units in Hungary and Rumania to "protect" Russian communications to Austria; for another, the stripping of Austrian resources, including the recently developed oil fields in the eastern section, can go on so long as no *Staatsvertrag* has been concluded between Austria and the Allies.

The difficulties besetting Renner and his Austrian colleagues are legion. Hundreds of thousands of Germans were either settled in Austria by Hitler or flocked there on their own account. What is to be done with them? All Austrian industries of any importance were smoothly taken over by various manipulations and constitute, on the books at least, "German" assets to which the victors have a claim. New industries were introduced into Austria by the Germans and existing ones greatly enlarged or improved, among them the exploitation of the oil fields. If on technical grounds these industries, their machinery, and their revenues were to be claimed as "reparations," Austrian economy would collapse completely. Russia on more than one occasion has hinted that she would sell her claims to such assets against a tidy sum of dollars which, Austria having none, would have to be advanced directly by Uncle Sam. So far the United States has not turned down the idea as such, deeming it probably a price to be paid for getting the Russians out of Austria, but the exorbitant amount demanded by the Russians has found a negative response in Washington. The displaced persons are another headache of the Renner regime. Still another is the vociferous Yugoslav propaganda for the inclusion of certain Austrian territories into Tito's paradise. The latest rift between Stalin and Tito has muted that propaganda, and it may perhaps die down in time.

In the struggle between East and West for the control of Europe, Austria is one of the most important figures on the international chessboard. Her strategic location ranks next to that of Germany and Czechoslovakia. Having lost the latter, the West must redouble its efforts to retain the Austrian bastion. It can count, as has been said, on the support of the great majority of Austrians. Also, as in the case of Saragat and Jouhaux, an evolutionary Socialist, Karl Renner, is one of our chief assets in this battle. As long as Renner remains at the helm of Austria, we have at least a fighting chance to keep that vital area true to its Western traditions and Western heritage.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

How the people of Italy entered the war

The Italians at War

By MARIAN TAYLOR ABBAGNANO

This is the second chapter of Marian Taylor Abbagnano's book: Italy and the Italians—1939-1948, *which we have had the pleasure of publishing. The first, "The Italians," appeared in our June issue. Mrs. Abbagnano casts an analytical but perceptive and charitable eye upon the Italians. Its realism should dispel the effects of the propaganda we all swallowed during the war.*

EVER since the Abyssinian campaign of 1935-36, the people of Italy had realized with discomfort and misgivings that Mussolini was trying to drag them definitely away from the Western democracies, which they liked and considered the only really civilized countries. Nobody was perhaps so surprised and dismayed as the average Italian when Mussolini actually managed to conquer Abyssinia in the face of the disapproval and the sanctions of the Western democracies. He was surprised because he had the rooted conviction that fascism would never achieve anything more than rhetorical fuss on paper and confusion in the ministries; and dismayed because he saw in this success of fascism a disturbing sign of its power and of the Western democracies' weakness—an idea he thoroughly disliked.

The Italian (grossly generalizing) is usually annoyed at, diffident, and envious of France because she possesses most of Italy's faults and yet is wealthier and more important; he likes and admires America because she is youthful, generous, clean, and prosperous. But his unsparing admiration and trust went to England, whom he conceived as the far-seeing, wily, tolerant, and powerful grandfather of European politics. On the international plane, he counted on England to perform the same function which his own common sense, wits, and individualism performed at home: that of subduing and compensating the obnoxious virulence of Fascist antics.

The idea of Italy entering into war against England and France would have made the Italians simply laugh (aside from deeply paining many of them) if it had not been for Germany. Germany was disagreeable, unloving, gross, aggressive, and hysterical under Hitler. But the average Italian did credit her for being unmistakably serious. Uncivilized, barbaric, but most unfortunately and importunately serious. In spite of the bombastic militaristic propaganda which had dazed and stunned them for years, the Italians knew perfectly well that their country was not the least bit prepared for war. And the Fascist officials and ministers knew it, too, however frantic their efforts to believe in their own propaganda. But Italy by Germany's side, *if* the former did not constitute too much of a hindrance for the latter, might just possibly come in for the pickings in a victorious war. What the Fascist officials did not know, because they surrounded themselves with every conceivable means of preventing this knowledge from getting to them, was that the average Italian was incredulous, recalcitrant, and bored in the face of their propaganda; that he disliked militarism, heroism, and didn't care a hoot for grandeur.

So when the Italian found himself face to face with the possibility of being dragged into a war side by side with Germany, whom he hated, against England and France, whom he liked and respected, he could have assumed three possible attitudes: (1) to allow that latent but persistent inferiority complex of his

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to be bolstered and bamboozled into thinking he could conquer glory, wealth, and equality with the Great Powers—these were the few; (2) to retire into a dignified and disapproving political void in which, though shocked and pained, he could not bring himself to wish his country's ill—and these were more; (3) to hope for the prompt and speedy defeat of his country, which would put an end to the Fascist nonsense, re-establish a proper order and scale of values, and allow him to return peacefully to his job, friends, and family—and this, I would venture to say, was the attitude of the great majority.

The first of these attitudes is so incompatible with the other two, the third is so drastically opposed to the first, that one may well understand how, from the very beginning, the possibility of war divided the Italians more deeply than ever, instead of uniting them.

FASCIST PROPAGANDA

As could be expected of a policy directed by the whims and caprices of a man whose prime motive was a rankling inferiority complex, fascism had never had a guiding line of conduct, nor indeed any pretense to coherence save in the monotonous vulgarity of its propaganda. It had been in turn revolutionary and reactionary. It had been the champion of the people, of youth, of daring, of "living dangerously," against the opportunistic desire for peace-at-all-costs of the decadent, flaccid bourgeoisie. It had been the champion of law and order, the defender of private property, private enterprise, the family, the state, the church, the monarchy, the railway timetable, against the chaotic surging of social unrest and anarchy. Its contortions had been infinite; its impudence, to the dispassionate eye, astounding. Only in one position had it maintained for 17 years an appearance of coherence and continuity: in asserting that it was a bulwark against the barbaric hordes of communism. This statement, dressed and stuffed in every garb and style, had been served for years to the Italian public with a persistence which had made it become one of the few things they really believed. (And for this reason, in the heart of many Italians there remained a soft spot for communism, even if they did not like it or believe in it any more than in fascism; it was the contrary to fascism, the simplest and grossest expression of dissidence from fascism, the forbidden fruit.)

When on August 23, 1939, the Italian papers announced the Russo-German pact of alliance and friendship, theirs was indeed a thankless task. It must be remembered that only three months before, in May, the Steel Pact between Germany and Italy had been signed, with much flag-waving, blowing of horns, and drivelling enthusiasm (on paper). Italy, according to all common measures of foresight, was staunchly bound to her friend and ally, Germany (who in turn had been one of the most powerful and enthusiastic bulwarks against the barbaric hordes). So Italy must approve of the Russo-German pact, and painfully explain to the tired and disillusioned public how these two great nations could be friendly after all, so long as each did not interfere with the other's internal policy. And the public accepted this new example of political acrobatism with an evermore tired and disillusioned shrug of the shoulders, and a still deeper conviction that politics was a dirty job and politicians were raving lunatics.

But this was not the only surprise for the Italian public in those memorable days of September, 1939. Mussolini had been bragging about his eight million bayonets for many years, and the success of his Abyssinian campaign had undoubtedly gone to his head. Mussolini had spared no effort to trumpet his hatred and contempt of the Western democracies. Mussolini was the all-powerful Duce of Italy, uncontested and uncontrolled "boss of the whole show." So *why*, when war broke out, didn't he declare war immediately on the Western democracies? Such an amazing piece of incoherence managed to astonish even the Italian public for a few hours or days. But astonishment was quickly replaced by an immense sigh of relief. Mild dissidence from mild fascism was all very well for peace-time. But open, deep-felt dissidence from roaring, militant, belligerent fascism presented a tragic personal problem for each man, a problem of such gravity that no price was too high to avoid facing it.

A still further cause for astonishment, during the following weeks, was the tone adopted by the press. Perhaps for the same reason that

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Catholic Church does not allow its faithful to read the Gospel without an authorized commentary, international news under fascism was doled out to the public with a constant, inevitable, and monotonous bias. The supreme and omniscient authorities must edit and comment that which is presented to the ignorant, irresponsible flock. But during the last months of 1939, the press inexplicably assumed a neutral tone, as if Italy were not only a neutral country, but a country in the habit of informing her public impartially about the happenings in the world. The Polish campaign, for instance, which had left people breathless and uncomfortable (the Polish Army, along with the French, had been considered, up to 1939, one of the most powerful in Europe), had been reported by the Italian press correspondents with apparent impartiality and remarkable ambiguity. Sympathy for Poland amongst the population was outspoken. But the population was thoroughly used to being dissident from the official point of view, and to swallowing and eliminating without the slightest reaction the pre-digested pills of information which were handed out by the newspapers.

It was, therefore, a novelty which most Italians hadn't experienced for 17 years to find the papers voicing an attitude which was substantially the same as their own. And the surprised Italian public opened its papers each morning in the last months of 1939 to find not only a lack of the usual bombastic propaganda, but items of news from Paris, London, New York, without comment. The German and British war communiqués (most often flatly contradicting each other) were printed in the same column, as if to say: "think what you like, we don't really care." The inevitable and startling conclusion was not only that Italy would not enter the war immediately, but that the government had lost its bearings, and did not have the slightest idea what it intended to do.

The Italian is not a political animal by nature. Only in exceptional circumstances will he take an interest in politics, internal or international. His norm is a tenor of life which is centered around his family, friends, and job, and his chief desire is not to be bothered within the circle of this life. War is certainly an exceptional circumstance, and its immediate possibility for Italy had caused a flurry of excitement and fear in which the moral position of each man began to crystallize clearly. For a few days or weeks, each man was faced with the problem of exactly what he would do if called to the colors to fight with Germany. In spite of the preceding propaganda (which, of course, nobody believed) about the "haves" and the "have-nots," about the "encircling" of Italy and Germany by the Western democracies, there was no obvious threat to the country's safety or sovereignty, nothing which would or could galvanize public opinion into action, or at least into a synchronized thrill of patriotism. So it is not surprising that the mass of the people—as soon as it became possible—promptly relaxed from the unnatural position of interest in politics, and above all rejoiced in not having to face and solve immediately that distressing personal problem.

Undoubtedly, a lot of trouble would have been saved if England and France had been powerful enough to crush Germany in the very beginning, and nobody would have been more delighted at such a solution than the average Italian. But the Polish campaign, and the subsequent months of inactivity, convinced people that most unfortunately Germany was not so easy to crush. The unlimited trust which a great number of people placed in the power and ability of England, along with their innate distrust of the judgement and wisdom of their own government, made them think that, in spite of Germany's unquestionable strength, she was ultimately doomed to defeat. Just when, where or how, nobody knew or cared to tell; but it was in the natural order of things that Germany—the upstart, the hysterical, the ancestral enemy of Italy—should be defeated by England. So people, once they realized their unbelievable good luck at not being "in" for the time being, settled back into their normal routine of life, observed *the* war which was not *their* war from a distance, and hoped that somehow things would patch up before their turn came.

Though he is not a political animal, the Italian has a very sharp *flair* for grasping situations on the slightest of evidence. Long before Ciano made his speeches to the Grand Council and the Chamber (December 7 and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

16), in which he practically denounced the Steel Pact, hinted at Germany's non-observance of their mutual agreements (to postpone war until 1941 or 1942, when Italy would be ready), and generally created an atmosphere of disapproval of Germany, public opinion in Italy had understood exactly how things stood. Only a few days or weeks after the declaration of war, rumors began to circulate, buzzing, discreet, cloaked, and persistent. And after having given vent to their joy at not being in a war which they disliked and disapproved of, the people began wondering if they might not soon find themselves in another war which they equally disliked but thoroughly approved of: with the Allies, against Germany. The idea was astonishingly heretical, and met with an enthusiasm which was probably due in part to its remote probability.

SYMPATHY FOR ALLIES

The Italian is essentially unmilitaristic, and any war is an unpleasant job which calls for capabilities and qualities which he considers "uncivilized": discipline, obedience, the surrendering of one's judgment and freedom to disapprove, the capacity to let oneself be butchered in an orderly and disciplined manner. (The Italian's contempt, in the following years, for the Russians and Germans, past masters in the art of letting themselves be butchered in an orderly and disciplined manner, was immense.) So it would be untruthful to say that public opinion could easily become enthusiastic about *any* war. And yet, so great was the dislike of the Germans, so deep-felt the exasperation at fascism, that the idea of war with the Allies against Germany (which would, of course, have implied the end of fascism, at least in its most obnoxious form) caused many an eye to light up with joy and enthusiasm. And this idea was buoyed up for several months by the surprisingly neutral tone of the newspapers. When confuted by the loyalists or fanatics who branded it as treason, it was sustained with the remark: "after all, we did it in 1915, why couldn't we do it now?" And like all manifestations of wishful thinking, it was persistent and dogged even in the face of subsequent events which belied it.

The only immediate and material consequences which the outbreak of war brought to the bulk of the population were that private cars could not run without special permits, sugar was rationed, and coffee was withdrawn from the market. This last was to be reserved for the armed forces, the authorities pompously declared, hoping thereby perhaps to awaken a patriotic thrill of self-sacrifice in the population. Whereas the reaction was the prompt and highly efficient institution of a black market for both these products. "Black market" is a term that has very different connotations according to the country to which it applies. In Italy, there was nothing dramatic or repulsive or even very illicit about it; it was, once again, the humorous correction of silly laws, performed on a minor, domestic, and amiable scale, and later on it had the very meritorious function of saving the population from utter starvation.

Hitler occasionally launched a "peace offensive," and many people hoped, on the whole, that he would be successful. They would, of course, have preferred that England beat Germany thoroughly; but for several reasons the discouraging opinion had got around that she was not quite capable of doing it—which was an obvious sign of her superior civilization. So perhaps it would be better to give up before these highly organized barbarians had put Europe to wrack and ruin. People talked about England giving up as if it had been their own country: a sad necessity, but perhaps the better course. Only a few were bold enough to say: "No, never!"—again as if it were their own country. Sumner Welles came to Rome on his tour through Europe, and people hoped that perhaps this emissary of the remote but powerful United States could, by a sort of sleight-of-hand, patch things up. Occasionally, amidst the general atmosphere of waiting, desultory activity, and hopes for a happy ending, the papers reminded the population that they were "a heroic and militaristic nation perparing for war in an ardent atmosphere of faith and sacrifice." People said "Nuts!" and wondered what would come next. The general economic situation in those months was excellent, what with industries working full speed to fill orders from Germany, France, and England, and Switzerland using Genoa as her only neutral port.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"If only the country could remain neutral," said many; but on second thought they added: "Yes, but *when* would we get rid of fascism, in that case?"

Then Ribbentrop came to Rome, and there was a screwing up of propaganda; a week later, on March 18, Hitler and Mussolini met at the Brenner Pass. The consequent overdose of official love and admiration for the German Führer, the German comrades, the German glory, caused many misgivings in the population. They knew and feared the pernicious influence that Hitler had on that erratic, touchy, and megalomaniac Duce of theirs who was "always right" (*Mussolini ha sempre ragione,* ran enormous inscriptions on the walls of houses all over the country). And gradually but inexorably, the official point of view swerved from uncertain neutrality towards preparation for war. Air-raid drills with temporary black-out were intensified; great stress began to be laid on the vexatious English control over Italian shipping in the Mediterranean. It began to appear evident that sooner or later Italy would really get "in."

But meanwhile nothing happened. The Germans gave an impression of efficiency and ability (for instance, the bombing of Scapa Flow) which people disliked, and the Allies gave an impression of inefficiency and inability which made people uncomfortable. And some people, many people, secretly hoped that France or England would attack Italy at that moment, occupy her, and thus save her the trouble of any future problems or decisions.

NORWAY

And then all of a sudden things began happening. Norway in April: "the base conspiracy of England to subjugate Norway's sovereignty, which the Germans were fortunately in time to prevent." Nobody paid any attention to the absurd bias of the headlines, but everybody pricked up his ears at the idea of the Germans and the British finally fighting face to face. A few days, a week or so of suspense, then the bald fact that the British were being beaten. Officialdom was enthusiastic, but the population was mute. Nobody said, "It's a pity," because the fear of the police was great, and the voicing of heretical opinions was done only among close friends. But the shopkeepers and the people you met in trains or cafés would say unenthusiastically, "The Germans are very powerful." And then the great date of the invasion of Belgium and Holland: "Germany assumes the armed protection of the Belgian and Dutch neutrality," said enormous headlines, with a lavish profusion of details about the secret plans of the British to attack these two countries. At the same time propaganda intensified its attacks against France and England. Great posters on the walls showed a brave young Fascist snapping chains against the background of a blue Mediterranean—the chains with which France and England were fettering the Italians in their *Mare Nostrum.* And at this moment began the decisive intensification of that vicious process of self-intoxication with which the Fascist officials inebriated themselves and part of the population.

Self-inflicted blindness had always been a characteristic of fascism and of those who professed it; otherwise they could not possibly have sustained the skeleton of heroism, grandeur, and discipline in a nation which is the antithesis of heroism, grandeur, and discipline. It is, therefore, not surprising, though it seems almost too typical to be true, that in view of such a serious venture as war the Fascist government officials deliberately chose the course of intensifying their process of self-intoxication. The population felt it then, and knew years later that no country could have been *less* ready for war than Italy in 1940. There were no military stocks, no raw materials, no food reserves; the equipment of the army was outdated and insufficient; the air force was a joke. The government officials knew these things; and speaking with a friend, they would perhaps look worried and gravely shake their heads. But speaking with a colleague or a superior, or still worse with the Duce, *nobody* spoke the truth. It was all important to *far bella figura,* to save the face, to show that everything was going perfectly in the most perfect of Fascist paradises. And because each man who did this had some inkling of the gravity of what he was doing, but did not wish to assume his responsibility, he would "hope" that his warped, inflated figures might by some miracle become true. In any case,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

even if his weren't true, perhaps those of his colleague were. And anyway, faith moved mountains and perhaps Fascist faith could create shoes for the soldiers and cannons for the artillery out of high-sounding figures on paper.

Practically no war is spontaneously popular among the rank and file of any nation, and it always takes a certain amount of propaganda to galvanize the population into that synchronized thrill of patriotism which will enable them to support its hardships and dangers. Sometimes, to obtain this result, it is enough to tell the truth; most often, the truth must be embellished and embroidered, and at other times, it is necessary to tell downright lies. This necessity, coupled with the other impellent necessity of self-intoxication on the part of the government officials, explains (but certainly does not justify) the nauseating tone of Fascist propaganda as Italy entered the war. And the people of Italy, powerless to prevent it, sat by and watched their papers, their ministers, their government throwing handfuls of dirt upon men and institutions they respected and admired.

For Italy, there was no element of danger in the war as it appeared in 1940. No amount of trickery could possibly convince the average Italian that England and France were a threat to his habits, traditions, modes of living. Indeed, the only obvious threat to these things was his own government that wanted to throw him into an unnecessary, unfelt, and unloved war. So the government, knowing that the theme of danger would yield only a pitiable tinkle, sought frantically to play upon that other possible rouser of patriotic thrills: righteous indignation. Hence the profusion of dirt.

Unfortunately, dirt clings not only to those upon whom it is thrown, but more particularly to those who throw it. Abuse, insults, and lies were not only powerless to move the great majority of Italians; they had the further effect of increasing their disgust with their own government and with those few who sustained it, thus deepening ever more the chasm which divided one Italian from another.

When, on June 10, 1940, Mussolini told the people of Italy that he had declared war on Great Britain and France (and up to the very last minute people had hoped that he would "declare peace"), he did not know what a terrible problem he was setting before each man and woman of his country. Personally, he was reacting to very simple motives; his inferiority complex towards the Western democracies made him simply delighted at the idea of declaring war on them. His growing inferiority complex towards Hitler must have made him furious—Hitler had copied his own methods; Hitler had grown and prospered with his help; Hitler had realized in Germany what was still a remote dream for Mussolini in Italy; Hitler was really "doing things," conquering countries, invading one of the Western democracies, making a success of himself. Mussolini had merely been making speeches about reviving the Roman Empire for the last 17 years. Hitler in those days appeared to be on the verge of winning a war in which he, Mussolini, the creator of fascism, had no part. It was intolerable. So what could he do except pounce on the dying body of his "latin sister" (as he had called France when he needed her approval), and do his utmost to come in for the pickings in this war which appeared easy, short, and victorious from the very beginning? England . . . . well, England was doomed, democracy was rotten; had one ever heard of a serious country indulging in a government crisis at the very moment when its future was at stake? This was a sure sign of its decay, of its incapacity to face situations as a cohesive whole. And as for America, she was too remote, too uninterested, to have any say; especially because Germany was *winning,* and the war would soon be over. He, Mussolini, must hurry up and get in before it finished. This was his one grand chance.

THE PEOPLE

But the people of Italy? The shopkeepers, workmen, bus drivers, the typists, bank clerks, lawyers, doctors, business men, housewives, intellectuals—all the mass of people—what did they say? The people of Italy, whom Mussolini confessedly considered as a despicable mass incapable of comprehending the grandeur he was bringing to them; who, according to his own saying, must be led on with *il bastone e la carota;* the people of Italy who

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

always placed as their chief objective quiet living, the minor, domestic satisfactions of life, the improvement, if not of their own condition, at least that of their children; what did these people say?

I would like the reader—who no doubt lived through this recent war in his own country, amidst a general consensus of opinions and passions which made his own opinions or passions so obvious he scarcely needed to voice them—to stretch his imagination and realize what his position would have been, should he have *disapproved* of the war he was waging, *distrusted* his government, and *hated* his allies. His first reaction would no doubt have been deep-felt, tragic dissidence. But then perhaps he would have stopped looking at the idealistic aspect of the thing; perhaps like the Italian, he would have become instinctively skeptical and diffident towards all high-sounding words such as justice, equality, right or wrong, whoever spoke them. He would have looked around him; what was happening to his neighbor, his friend, his brother, himself? They were being packed off willy-nilly to privation, discomfort, and idiotic butcherdom. And so perhaps he too, like the Italian, through a sense of human solidarity, of humble, brotherly, day-to-day solidarity, would have stopped questioning the ideals and accepted his fate. If he had wanted to consider the ideal aspect of the situation, perhaps he too, like the Italian, would have wondered where his duty really lay: for everywhere there is an age-old notion that, when one's country is at war, all petty, private questions should be put aside in a passionate, selfless, unquestioning effort of loyalty towards the mother country. Furthermore, the ally of one's country at that moment was apparently winning what seemed to be a very short and fairly bloodless war.

These different motives (solidarity, loyalty to one's country, easy victory), each with its own appeal to different mentalities, can explain why in June, 1940, Italy (where, despite the opinion of some Italians, moral standards are as sound and as vigilant as in any other civilized country) underwent a wholesale moral crisis, with the consequent flinching of a part of the population. It is true that millions of people, especially all those older than 30, looked worried and grave when they heard the declaration of war, because, aside from any moral consideration, they *knew* that the country was not prepared for war. It is true that millions of people struggled in the coils of that terrible dilemma: unquestioning loyalty to one's country versus loyalty to one's own intimate idea of right and justice. But it is also true that millions of people smothered their misgivings and became actually enthusiastic about the war. "Perhaps we could actually win," was the startling consideration they made. And nobody could have been more surprised at such an idea; the more so, because they knew that victory would have made them morally "right."

There was, of course, no moral crisis for the rabid sustainers of fascism; but it must always be remembered that these were a very small minority. And the others, all those who allowed themselves to become enthusiastic, did so against their better judgment, although in the name of superior ideals.

* * *

In the good old days, a man who was down to his last dollar at least knew where his next three meals were coming from.

—*Grit*

A small girl was asked by her teacher to write a short essay on the life of Benjamin Franklin. She handed in the following: "Benjamin Franklin was born in Boston and moved to Philadelphia. He met a lady and she laughed at him. He married her and discovered electricity."

—*Cappers Weekly*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Gentlemen's agreements in operation

INFLATION CONTROL

II. Voluntary Agreements

By VICTORIA SCHUCK
Professor of Political Science, Mount Holyoke College

THE federal government emerged as a "partner" of business, industry, and agriculture under the 1947 anti-inflation law. The Commerce, Interior, and Agriculture Departments, and the Office of Defense Transportation became the negotiators of the voluntary agreements designed to combat inflation.

Neither the idea of securing voluntary restraints by private enterprise nor the economic problems to be remedied were new. The device of voluntary agreements—with variations—had become shopworn in efforts to bolster the economy as long ago as the N.R.A. But it had been pulled out of the drawer again by a succession of defense agencies in pre-war days as a method of channeling scarce commodities to defense objectives and of keeping the lid on prices when "jawbone" power had to serve in place of mandatory authority. As to the problems, predictions that "materials would be running out of our ears" in the wake of the war had proved incorrect. Shortages in basic minerals and metals had remained to plague reconversion plans. In 1946 and 1947, the Civilian Production Administration, successor to the War Production Board, had been badgered for more steel to provide veterans' housing, a greater production of agricultural implements, and new freight cars.

The law itself forbade price-fixing agreements. But early statements of officials administering the voluntary programs contained a rather ebullient optimism that price pressures could be relieved. They looked for a better supply-demand relationship resulting from voluntary plans which they envisioned would increase production as well as direct materials to crucial areas in the economy.

There was more to the voluntary agreements section of the law than met the eye at the outset. For the statistically minded, it may be recorded that over a period of eight months, a total of 12 voluntary plans have been completed, and others are pending. The first was arranged hastily by the Interior Department with the petroleum industry in January, 1947, as a temporary plan to alleviate the winter fuel shortage. Recently it has been negotiated as a "permanent plan" to prevent hardships on consumers using gasoline, distillates, and heavy fuel oils.

Despite rather valiant efforts of the Agriculture Department, food commodities remain untouched by voluntary agreements. Industry has bucked restraints, or shortages became less serious in view of larger crop prospects. The abortive attempts to make agreements with the grain-consuming industries, including the distillers, are familiar. One group, the poultry producers, reduced their hatch to conserve feed grains in time to avert an agreement. By midyear there was a significant improvement in grain supplies: the country expected its second largest wheat crop, bumper crops in small grains, and perhaps the largest corn crop. It is worth noting that there was a proposal to allocate available meat according to regional demands. But no voluntary agreement is now contemplated although seasonal trends have served to diminish the meat supply.

The principal story of voluntary plans, however, belongs to the industrial field, to the Office of Industry Cooperation or the "voluntary W.P.B." in the Commerce Department, to the 11 iron and steel agreements negotiated,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and to plans not yet completed. Here agreements may be extended to other materials, including nonferrous metals, as stockpiling programs progress. Here the scope of the law, the role of labor, anti-trust problems, questions of compliance, and the "spectre" of mandatory controls have come to the fore. Here, too, a partial evaluation of the method of voluntary agreements may be made.

The initial areas in which voluntary plans to divert scarce materials were sought grew out of production goals fixed by several federal agencies. In 1948 the federal Housing and Home Finance Agency wanted to accelerate the construction of low-cost housing and aimed at a million new housing units, or 150,000 more than the number built in 1947. O.D.T. was shooting for a rapid replacement of old freight cars. Both Interior and Commerce were interested in increasing the production of gas and oil products, and the National Petroleum Council hoped for 37,600 new wells in 1948. In view of world food shortages, the Department of Agriculture stressed the need for greater production of farm machinery.

Consequently the Secretary of Commerce, with the blessing of the Cabinet, selected four critical industries where raw materials were needed and where voluntary agreements appeared a likely means of remedying the shortages—railroad equipment, farm machinery, petroleum equipment, and low-cost housing. To this list, the Office of Industry Cooperation added textiles, leather, chemicals, and drugs for exploration. The chief bottleneck was steel, and as a first step, former Secretary W. Averell Harriman called in the major steel producers. They and the O.I.C. worked out machinery for voluntary programs.

FREIGHT CARS

The first and most spectacular agreement, and the one most wrangled over subsequently, was the plan to provide steel for freight cars. It was taken over from the O.D.T., which had obtained assurances from the steel producers months before that they would supply car-building and repair shops with steel for 10,000 freight cars each month. In point of fact, the number had never been reached, though the total had been edging up from approximately 5,500 in June, 1947, to over 9,000 in March, 1948. The new formalized agreement called for 250,000 tons of steel a month beginning in April. But it was June before production records showed 10,000 cars, and meanwhile O.D.T. began calling for steel for 14,000 or 16,000 cars monthly. The steel producers have denied the request, alleging that the railways are not making maximum use of existing rolling stock and car-builders are not utilizing steel allocated. If the country enters a more active preparedness period, steel-men will consider channeling more plate for this purpose.

Other voluntary steel agreements completed in the first eight months under the law fall into several categories—housing, transportation equipment, fuel equipment, military uses, and atomic energy. Steel tonnage calculated on the assumption that the terminal date of agreements is February 28, 1949, was allocated as follows:

2,750,000	for freight cars
512,500	for armed forces (1,269,000 is the total estimate and extends beyond the life of Public Law 395)
233,360	for manufacture of warm air heating equipment for houses
201,900	for oil-tanker construction
160,000	for Atomic Energy Commission
100,000	for construction and repair of domestic barges and towing vessels
82,650	for oil-field tanks and production equipment for petroleum industry
49,150	for factory-made steel houses
12,850	for anthracite coal industry equipment
10,000	for construction, repair and maintenance project of National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics
4,112,410	total tonnage
912,000	tons of pig iron for pressure and and soil pipes for houses

If the aggregate steel production for 1948 is estimated at 66 million tons, the amount brought under voluntary allocation represents a small percentage. Early assumptions that 17 million tons would be covered by agreements, of which 3 or 4 million would constitute a dislocation, were predicated upon estimates of higher military and export requirements and a shipbuilding program. There is still a chance that these programs and others will materialize. The mining machinery and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rain-carrying equipment manufacturers, the bituminous coal producers, and several cities including Los Angeles, San Francisco, New Orleans, and Yuma have put in a bid for assistance.

The present voluntary plans thus divert steel and iron to uses having a "public purpose." The highly controversial program for prefabricated steel houses may be cited as an exception. This plan received approval in a frank attempt to lower housing costs. The steel products advisory committee rejected the original request of government agencies and manufacturers on the grounds that it was profligate to provide 9 or 10 tons for every steel house if an ordinary dwelling could be built with 1½ tons. The steel producers in reversing their decision yielded on the ground that manufacturers should be allowed to demonstrate the utility of such cheap housing.

PLOESER RIDER

On the question of military needs, as soon as the Attorney General ruled that national defense came within the 1947 act, industry determined to give top priority to military requirements. Voluntary agreements have forestalled the use of mandatory powers to ration steel suddenly thrust upon the President by the Ploeser amendment to the draft act. And voluntary methods for the time being at least have satisfied the National Security Resources Board. The about-face of the Republicans in supporting the mandatory rider contrary to previous policy, and their present willingness to revert to voluntary plans to take care of the armed services may be explained in terms of small business. Voluminous protests before the House Small Business Committee that small plants with idle capacity could not obtain steel for military contracts led Republican Walter C. Ploeser to sponsor the amendment. It can always be used as a club to prevent voluntary plans savoring of discrimination against small business.

A number of industries—nitrogen, gypsum board and lath, softwood plywood, rayon and cotton textiles, and alkali—have rejected voluntary plans, the usual contention being that their anticipated production would eliminate shortages. No refusal has precipitated such an aftermath of criticism as that of the agricultural implement manufacturers who turned a deaf ear to advice from Agriculture and Commerce officials to formulate a plan giving them more iron and steel. They wanted no interference from government. Three large companies are now under attack by the Justice Department in anti-trust suits. Moreover the results of a special probe by Senator Kenneth S. Wherry's Small Business Committee of farm machinery companies have aroused further demands for a voluntary rationing agreement.

The major efforts to increase production have been directed toward obtaining additional ferrous scrap. If we had more scrap and high quality coking coal, we might be able to raise steel production by five per cent. The program now being developed is twofold: to increase the flow of scrap by a national industrial drive and to secure our share of the 15 million tons of booty scrap in Germany. Whether the Attorney General will find that the voluntary agreements section can be stretched to cover the establishment of a private corporation as an exclusive agent in Germany to purchase indigenous scrap for export to this country is problematical.

As to the types of agreements which come within the scope of the 1947 law, the Attorney General has inclined to a strict construction. He has extended anti-trust exemptions to plans for stockpiling scarce and critical materials, national defense, atomic energy, national aeronautics projects, and distressed municipalities whose needs affect health and safety. He has denied proposals for export agreements as not being within the scope of the act.

The machinery set up in Congress to handle the voluntary programs comprises a tidy organization of some 50 people, attached directly to the Secretary's office. It is staffed with men of industrial experience in such widely varied firms as Procter and Gamble, U. S. Steel, U. S. Rubber, and Johns-Manville. Many were in W.P.B. during the war. There has been a problem of getting negotiators who understand the complicated structure of industry, but neither Congress, the President, nor the Justice Department has been willing to allow dollar-a-year men to serve as operating officials. Legislators argued that it

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

would be embarrassing to have a man in the pay of a company negotiating with that company among others.

While the Secretary of Commerce and the Attorney General carry out the plan, the focal point in negotiations is the industry advisory committee. Each of the twenty odd committees now organized is supposed to represent a cross section of industry with members from small, medium, and large companies distributed with attention to geography, types of products, and degree of integration. Upon the advice of the O.I.C., the Secretary of Commerce makes appointments after the Justice Department clears the names on matters of previous trust violations. Producers and suppliers are organized separately, the committees varying from six to twenty or more members, depending upon the size of the industry.

INDUSTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Although the function of the committee is often referred to as quasi-governmental, this interpretation appears dubious at best. The members pay their own expenses, take no oath, receive no certificate of membership. They are representative of the whole industry, and their job is legally limited to the giving of advice on problems affecting the industry. But who will claim that they lose identity with their companies or divest themselves of their respective interests?

Without the assent of the industry advisory committee, there can be no plan. A plan consists of two parts: the plan proper, which is a published document, and the supplementary series of individual requests for compliance by suppliers and consumers. A voluntary agreement is a "gentlemen's agreement" and, therefore, unenforceable. Where companies comply even though the compliance is not mandatory, they are entitled to protection from anti-trust prosecution. If a person wished to test the validity of an agreement, he might claim injury under anti-trust laws and bring a suit for damages against the participants in a plan.

The O.I.C. is responsible for maintaining a continuing review of the operation of agreements. In the open-end agreement, the claimant government agency supervises the use of a commodity by contractors and subcontractors. The task of checking on noncompliance raises the question of the maximum number of participants in any one agreement. For example, 250 companies have signed the freight car plan and over 400, the warm air heating agreement. There may be a point beyond which an agreement is not practicable in terms of too many participants.

Labor originally took the attitude that the anti-inflation measure was a Republican device for refusing to meet the President's request for allocation controls. But once it was law, the unions felt that they should have a maximum role in voluntary agreements. The A.F.L. thus proposed that all discussions should arise from labor-management committees in industry. This issue was never pressed. And as the programs evolved, the unions have evinced little interest except to lend support to such plans as shipbuilding and all-steel houses.

A basic objection to the law is that while it affords a forum for the mutual exchange of ideas between government and business, it permits the singling out of special groups for preferential treatment. If one accepts the basic idea, there are still subsidiary objections. In the case of steel, the consuming company may ask, "Do we get our regular or historical tonnage *plus* the amounts allocated for a public purpose?" The answer is left up to the steel producers.

With respect to anti-trust problems, Justice officials are aware that patterns of joint action now being established may make anti-trust enforcement difficult in the future. This need not necessarily follow, but it is true that the voluntary agreements provision allows action that would be illegal under the regular operation of anti-trust laws.

The effect of the 1947 law has been to underline shortages rather than industry expansion. O.I.C.'s intent has been a "minimum disruption to normal production and distribution." If steel tonnage, for example, can be taken off the top, leaving a sufficient amount for the practical operation of the civilian economy, voluntary plans can be made to work. Otherwise, stacking program on program would leave industries outside voluntary agreements with substantially reduced commodities.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Industry, and particularly steel, desires freedom to control distribution for future markets most favorable to it, and to control output in terms of the most favorable "product mix." Industry with some justification fears that priorities in one area may lead to priorities in another until allocations pervade the whole system.

Brief experience under the law shows that an agreement which meets one of the stated purposes—to assist in stabilizing the economy, curbing inflation, promoting the orderly distribution of goods, or preventing the maldistribution of goods—may nullify another. Freight car, barge, and stockpiling programs provide for priority allocation of scarce materials affecting industrial production. Resulting scarcities in other segments of the economy bring higher prices and inflation. An indirect effect is the expansion of the grey market.

Until recently there was no systematic consideration of the problem of priorities. Nowhere was there a balance sheet or review of relative allotments. In view of increased foreign commitments, military requirements, and increased domestic demands for basic materials, Charles Sawyer, Secretary of Commerce, has reorganized the department's advisory committees. A new interdepartmental committee will give advice on export controls and voluntary agreements.

Whatever the limitations of the law, these should not obscure the competent, vigorous administration of the O.I.C. Industry in a limited way has given evidence of a belief in the efficacy of participating in agreements for the public interest.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AS AMENDED BY THE ACTS OF MARCH 3, 1933, AND JULY 2, 1946, of FORUM, published monthly at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, for October, 1948.

State of Pennsylvania, County of Philadelphia. Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared D. G. Redmond, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Editor of the Forum and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily, weekly, semiweekly or triweekly newspaper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the act of August 24, 1912, as amended by the acts of March 3, 1933, and July 2, 1946 (section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations), printed on the reverse of this form, to wit: 1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are: Publisher, Events Publishing Co., Inc., 108-110 Walnut St., Philadelphia, Pa.; Editor, D. G. Redmond, 108-110 Walnut St., Philadelphia, Pa.; Managing Editor, None; Business Manager, None. 2. That the owner is: (if owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding one per cent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a firm, company, or other unincorporated concern, its name and address, as well as those of each individual member, must be given.) Events Publishing Co., Inc., 108-110 Walnut St., Philadelphia, Pa.; Shelby Cullom Davis, Scarborough-on-Hudson, N. Y.; Sidney B. Fay, 194 Brattle St., Cambridge, Mass.; Delia Kuhn, 202 Primrose St., Chevy Chase, Md.; Orin McMillan, 1341 Morrison St., Madison, Wis.; D. G. Redmond, 108-110 Walnut St., Philadelphia, Pa. 3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding one per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: (If there are none, so state.) None. 4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given: also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

(SEAL) D. G. REDMOND, Editor

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 4th day of October, 1948.

HELEN M. MACGREGOR, Notary Public
(My commission expires February 17, 1949)

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Opportunities lost at the Special Session

THE TURNIP DAY CONGRESS

By ELLEN D. ELLIS
Professor Emeritus of Political Science
Mount Holyoke College

IN President Truman's acceptance speech before the Democratic Convention, on July 15, he declared that he would call Congress into special session on July 26. The expressed purpose of this unusual procedure was the enactment of some measures of which the Congressional majority had declared themselves to be in favor but upon which they had failed to act, as well as some measures with regard to which a difference of opinion existed between the Executive and the Legislature. President Truman's statement was followed 12 hours later by the formal call.

This action on the part of the President was unprecedented. At no previous party convention had a newly nominated President used his acceptance speech as the occasion of a call to Congress to meet during, or on the eve of, a presidential campaign. And on no previous occasion had a president thus chosen to throw the initial steps of the election campaign into the legislative body.

By some, President Truman's call to Congress was characterized as a "cheap political trick." By many it was seen as a potentially clever campaign maneuver. To a still greater number, it was a telling challenge to the Eightieth Congress, which the President had already dubbed "the worst . . . . since the first one met." As a challenge to the Eightieth Congress, it was also seen as a challenge to the Republican Party which has, during the past year and a half, dominated the national legislature in an administration headed by a Democratic executive.

The attacks on President Truman's strategy seemed to carry with them an underlying assumption that the transferring of at least some of the onus of the presidential campaign to the legislature involved not merely a new but an unjustified and an unjustifiable use of the American Congress. It is the belief of this writer that, on the contrary, President Truman, although he may not have clearly recognized the fact himself, was acting in accordance with a fundamental political principle, the principle of the inescapable necessity for the existence of an inner harmony in government if government is to function satisfactorily. It can be argued that, in thus attempting to throw the election discussion, if not the actual election of the executive as well as of the legislature, into the Senate and the House of Representatives, he was borrowing a leaf from the constitution of Great Britain. In Great Britain the political complexion of the House of Commons can itself determine, or force a popular determination of that of the working executive, the Ministry.

The government of the United States stands alone among the Great Power democracies in being a government of the presidential type—the acting executive is chosen by popular election independently of the legislative and is, therefore, not dependent on the legislative for either office or tenure of office. In the government of Great Britain and other "cabinet" or "parliamentary" governments, the working executive is directly responsible to the legislative; if political differences develop, the legislative can force the executive either to resign, or to "go to the country" for a popular verdict in a general parliamentary election which will determine whether the existing government shall continue in office. In a government of this latter type, a definitive role in the selection of the executive is thus played by the legislature. Except at the regular general elections fixed at constitutional intervals, a vote in the legislature adverse to the existing executive or the clear likelihood of such a vote must precede an election in the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

country at large. The vote in such an election is for members of the legislature only, the result of that vote determining, however, in its turn the political make-up of the executive branch.

A struggle with the executive which develops in the Congress of the United States is not definitive in the sense in which such a struggle is definitive in Great Britain. It is a frequent, even a common experience here for a president of one political party and a congress of another to worry along for two years or longer, without any immediate political repercussion, and without even the possibility of such an adjustment as the British working constitution renders obligatory. This was the situation in which President Truman found himself after January, 1947.

The wide separation of power between executive and legislative in the United States has had other important consequences for our political system. These consequences take on added weight during every presidential campaign and are of special significance in their bearing on the special congressional session.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The fact that every four years two major election campaigns—an executive and a legislative—must be fought in the United States puts a tremendous burden upon the American political parties. This burden is rendered still heavier by the fear entertained by each of the parties that without herculean effort on its part political harmony between the two political branches of the government may not be secured. Another consequence is the scope and intensity of the campaign. In Great Britain, for example, the campaign is fought out only in the separate parliamentary election districts, but in the United States the presidential campaign assumes nationwide scope, and corresponding intensity. This intensity is magnified by the fact that the official to be elected is not only the working or political executive, such as the British Prime Minister or the French Premier, but combines with that office the functions of the ceremonial or titular head of the government, such as the British King or the French President. James Bryce, in his *American Commonwealth,* characterized the American presidency as "the greatest office in the world, unless we except the Papacy, to which any one can rise by his own merits." It has also been designated as the greatest elective office in the world.

The factors present in the situation as outlined above have inevitably led to an overorganization of political parties in the United States. The major struggles between them have tended to become contests for power rather than for principles or issues. The necessity of uniting upon a single candidate a country as large and as diversified as the United States, and of securing as many votes as possible for this candidate from a population distributed among 48 states points to the political wisdom of concealing, or at least soft pedaling, differences and stressing likenesses of points of view. And this procedure is rendered not less politically wise by the fact that each state serves as a multiple election district, all of whose electoral votes are cast for the party polling the plurality of presidential votes therein.

The election effort as a contest for power rather than for principle is especially conspicuous in the large states, and more particularly still in the large doubtful states, since there the winning of a small number of wavering votes will mean the addition of the entire electoral college of the state to the winning side. It is not without meaning in this connection that so many of our presidential and vice-presidential candidates have come from the large doubtful states such as New York and California.

Reasons other than those inhering in our governmental form and practice have been responsible for the absence of clear political issues between our major political parties. In part these are to be found in the fact that the United States is a relatively new country of vast and various resources; this fact has militated against the emergence of deep-seated differences among classes driven to seek and push their ends directly by political means.

Our major political parties have thus developed very largely as vested interests or institutions which have tended to regard themselves as ends in themselves rather than as instruments of constitutional government through which more or less specific ends should be brought about. They have become,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in the minds of their members, institutions into which they have been born as an inheritance and in which they remain as a matter of social position and prestige. Third party movements have been notoriously unsuccessful in the United States.

PLATFORMS

It has been a commonplace that the platforms of the major parties have differed from each other in emphasis and tendency rather than in specific positions taken on specific issues. And the platforms adopted this summer were not exceptions to this rule. The Republican platform was couched in more general terms than the Democratic, and left a wider field for interpretation. The Democratic platform contained more, and more specific commitments. In no single respect did they take direct issue with each other. The Eightieth Congress had, during its regular session, taken direct issue with President Truman chiefly on the matters of tax reduction and civil rights. It had, however, either failed to act, or to complete action, or had taken what the President considered inadequate action in respect of much legislation which he had urged. With regard to some matters, notably housing, inflation, and social security, the Republican Party had, in its platform adopted in June, pledged itself in more or less definite terms. By calling the Congress into special session and presenting it with a program reiterating the request for legislation on many of these same subjects, President Truman sought to force the Republicans to take a definite stand, and thus reveal which of these items in reality constituted clear cut issues for the campaign.

The record is known to all. The Congress failed to take up the challenge thus thrown down. Out of 16 items mentioned by the President, no action whatever was taken on 11. On only three—consumer credit controls, regulation of bank credit, and the loan for the United Nations headquarters in New York—was the action requested taken. On one—housing—limited action was taken. On one—the International Wheat Agreement—action was specifically deferred. The Republican Congress, true to American tradition, declined to play the definitive role that it might have played in the campaign by clarifying issues, and thereby, also, setting the scene and the policy to which a Republican president would have been expected to adjust himself. The chance was thus lost to lay at least one stone in the bridge between executive and legislative so sorely needed in our presidential system.

If, on the other hand, Congress had taken up the President's challenge as an opportunity rather than as an accusation, had really debated the issues involved, and had then taken a clear stand, the episode might have been of the highest significance, not only for the Republican Party, but for our governmental and political system as a whole. The Republican Party would then have been in a postion to claim credit for what positive action it might have taken after full debate. The clarification of issues in open congressional debate would have been of inestimable benefit to the voters, and might have established a precedent which would have set our political parties on a path leading to a more realistic and a more mature political future.

Positions taken by the parties on the floor of Congress on the eve of a presidential campaign would have constituted a form of legislative leadership signally lacking in our political system as it has functioned in the past. The Congress might, in thus assuming a leadership, not only of the voting public, but of the executive itself, and a leadership, it is to be noted, which would have been projected into the campaign to follow—the Congress might in this way have taken a significant step toward introducing into our body politic an inner organic unity of which a too literal interpretation of the constitutional separation of power has hitherto deprived it.

Man is a gregarious animal, much more so in his mind than in his body. He may like to go alone for a walk but he hates to stand alone in his opinions.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Rommel's Last Days

By
COUNTESS
WALDECK

GENERAL ERWIN ROMMEL was 49 years old when he was catapulted into fame in May, 1940, as Commander of the Seventh Panzer Division during the German sweep across France. Until then he was virtually unknown, even in Germany. Two years later, when his Africa Corps stood only 60 miles from Alexandria, his name was a household word all over the world. That was the year Hitler made him a Field Marshal, and a British opinion poll voted him the ablest general of the war.

What sort of man was this Erwin Rommel who thus fascinated his enemies? Was he a military genius, or was he just a successful Nazi thug? What was his political role? And particularly, what are the long-hidden facts about his mysterious death? His is an extraordinary story.

In October, 1942, Rommel's Africa Corps —instead of entering Cairo as he had triumphantly boasted—was beaten at Alamein, and from here on the hunter became the hunted. The steadily dwindling Africa Corps was chased back 1500 miles to Tunis. Rommel's grandiose undertaking ended in a somewhat ludicrous debacle. And in 1944 he was powerless to stop the American troops swarming across the Normandy beaches.

Yet Rommel's magic withstood all these mishaps, and today, some four years after his death, he emerges as the only legendary general World War II has produced. Compared to an Eisenhower or a Montgomery, his laurels appear singularly perishable. He never matched MacArthur's remote grandeur. He lacked the strategic sophistication which made Von Rundstedt the expert's delight. Yet he brought to modern generalship something none of the others had—a quality which might be called military sex appeal. It was in his name —a name with thunder and drums in it. It was in the cocky set of his cap. It was in the peasant-like cunning which could light up his hooded blue gaze.

To his men, who saw him rising out of the turret of his tank in the front battle line, he was the god of battle. "Stay close to me," he once said to one of his officers while they were under fire. "Nothing ever happens to me." When the Tommies of the British Eighth Army, which opposed him in Africa, spoke of "doing a rommel" they meant doing a superb job. And American troops visiting the ancient castle of La Roche Guyon stared in awe not because of the illustrious family of La Rochefoucauld, lords of the manor for centuries, but because Rommel had slept there.

TALENTS

The qualities which made Rommel a military myth were his eye for the situation of the moment, his talent for improvisation, his ruthless will, and his ability to impose that will on the men under him. All these abilities came into sharp focus in the African campaign. Hard pressed by the British, he knew he must frighten them off by convincing them of his superior strength. But how to appear strong with only a few troops? Knowing that every day the R.A.F. photographed over the German lines, he ordered every available vehicle to drive incessantly for two whole nights, tracks over tracks, in the surrounding desert. The resulting photographs, with added German propaganda, led the British into overrating the German forces, and they retreated. Ordering an attack on another occasion, he was told that only six tanks were available. "Then attack with dust!" Rommel thundered. A few moments later every vehicle in the corps was driving in circles within a space of a few miles. Within the immense dust cloud which arose, the six panzers shot blindly ahead against the enemy. Believing themselves attacked by an entire panzer division, the British fled.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It was during the losing battles of the African campaign that Rommel first came to realize Hitler's abysmal contempt for the human being. Rommel knew that the campaign was lost beyond redemption—due to the German lack of gasoline and equipment and the greatly re-inforced British strength. He demanded that Hitler withdraw the German troops as the only means of saving the lives of hundreds of thousands of men. Hitler replied excitedly: "Triumph or death!"

"I neither died nor triumphed," Rommel later commented dryly. Before the surrender at Tunis in May, 1943, Hitler had ordered his return to Germany to become part of the Führer's entourage. As Goebbels wrote in his diary, "Military authority such as Rommel enjoys can't be created at will and then taken away at will." So Rommel was not identified with the defeat.

The months that followed were bitter ones for Rommel. It was not only the frightful plight of his Africa Corps, the catastrophic end of the undertaking on which he had staked his fame. Like most unimaginative people, Rommel was perfectly able to bear tyranny as long as it was directed against others. Now that he had run head on into it himself, the whole truth about the Nazi's callous inhumanity was revealed to him. Preoccupied with self-aggrandizement, he had heretofore ignored or rejected the wholesale killings, the slave labor, the concentration camps, the Gestapo terror in the occupied areas. Now he was horrified by what the Nazis did in the name of the German people. "I conducted a clean war," he said, "but they soil my uniform." Later, when Hitler released his notorious order to shoot hostages at the ratio of 12 to 1, Rommel was one of the few German commanders who threw it into the wastebasket.

What pained Rommel most was the realization that the African edict of triumph or death was only a dress rehearsal for a greater catastrophe to come. Hitler, he understood at last, would drag all Germany into the abyss rather than give up. Had not the Allies proclaimed their policy of unconditional surrender right at this point, Rommel might have joined the Resistance and given it the determined direction it always lacked. But with the fate of Germany and Europe at stake, a soldier had to fight.

To bolster the confidence of the German people and impress the Allies, Hitler entrusted to Rommel the ground command of the anti-invasion forces in Normandy. Rommel's boast about throwing the Allies back into the sea was made for the gallery. He foresaw that an Allied full-dress invasion could not be repulsed with the desperately meager supply of materiel and troops at his disposal. Realizing the futility of so reporting to Hitler, in April, 1944, he conferred with General Karl Heinrich von Stülpnagel, military commander of France and a leader of the Resistance, about ways and means of ending the war in the West at once and overthrowing the Nazi regime.

Much has been made of the fact that Rommel never joined the Nazi Party, never was decorated with the golden party emblem. Apropos of the blood purge in 1934 he said, "This was the moment to wipe out that whole Nazi bunch once and for all." Yet abruptly in 1935 he called Hitler a great man who had broken the shackles of Versailles and was revitalizing and uniting Germany. His sudden change of heart was occasioned by Hitler's proclamation of the return of the Reich to conscription and rearmament.

Now, with Hitler's cause already lost, he was joining the Resistance. Some said he turned against Hitler when there was nothing more to expect of him in the way of decorations, promotions, and victories. Actually, for Rommel, it was the end of all vanities and ambitions. He knew the victors would be ungenerous and the vanquished ungrateful. All he hoped for was something a little better than unconditional surrender.

ROMMEL'S ARMISTICE

Rommel wished to offer an armistice to Eisenhower and Montgomery without the knowledge of Hitler. Its basis was to be the withdrawal of German troops behind the Westwall. In return the Allies were to stop bombing German cities at once. In the East, however, the Germans were to continue fighting on shortened front—Rumania, Lemberg, Vistula, Memel—in defense of Western civilization. What did not seem to occur to Rommel was that an armistice which left the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Germans armed was wholly unacceptable to the Allied commanders, and that at the moment the Germans did not appear convincing or desirable defenders of Western civilization.

Rommel proposed to have Hitler seized by reliable panzer units and tried before a German tribunal. He did not believe in making a martyr of Hitler by killing him outright. But with the Allies swarming ashore at Normandy, and the last hope for a "better" unconditional surrender gone, Rommel was drawn by Von Stülpnagel into "Operation Valkyr," a conspiracy of German Army leaders and anti-Nazi civilians to assassinate Hitler and dissolve the Nazi Party. Several unsuccessful attempts on the Führer's life had already been made by the conspirators; now they set July 20 as the date when a bomb was to be smuggled into Hitler's headquarters in East Prussia during a meeting of the general staff.

On the evening of July 17, Rommel, returning from the front, reached the outskirts of Livarot. Suddenly two enemy planes with British markings headed directly toward his car. One, flying only a few yards above the ground, strafed the left half of the car. Rommel was knocked unconscious by a blow against his left temple and thrown out of the car. As he lay on the road, the second plane swooped down and opened fire. Rommel was so seriously wounded that the doctors for some time doubted he would live. They diagnosed a fracture of the base of the skull, two fractures of the temple, a broken cheekbone, an injury to the left eye, a concussion of the brain.

And, strangely, there exists in the archives of the R.A.F. no report mentioning the strafing of an isolated car near Livarot at that hour on July 17. Was this Hitler's answer to Rommel's ultimatum?

In any case, it was the first of two severe blows to befall the anti-Nazi conspiracy. The second came on July 20. The bomb went off two yards from Hitler, wrecking his headquarters, and injuring 10 men and killing 3. But Hitler miraculously escaped serious wounds.

Nazi revenge was swift.

On October 14, 1944, Rommel rose early in his villa in Herrlingen, near Ulm, to meet his 16-year-old son, Manfred, who was arriving home for a brief army furlough. But another, less welcome, visitor was expected at noon that day. The previous night a telephone call had informed Rommel that General Burgdorf was being sent by the Führer to discuss with him his "reassignment to a new command." There was nothing unusual in this. Rommel had made a brilliant recovery; except for a partial paralysis of his left eye he was as good as new. Still, the visit filled him with forebodings. "Burgdorf's coming might be a trap," he said to Manfred at breakfast.

At 12 o'clock General Burgdorf arrived, accompanied by General Maisel. Rommel, with his wife and son, greeted the visitors. They kissed Her Excellency's hand; there was the usual exchange of platitudes about the lovely autumn weather and everyone's health, including the Field Marshal's splendid recovery. Presently Frau Rommel and Manfred withdrew.

A little after one o'clock Rommel came upstairs to his wife's room. "What is the matter?" Frau Rommel exclaimed, alarmed by the look on her husband's face.

"In a quarter of an hour I shall be dead," Rommel said absent-mindedly, as though tasting the words for their meaning.

He told her quickly: Burgdorf had brought him the Führer's death warrant. The testimony of Stülpnagel (who had been hung after he blinded himself in a suicide attempt) and of others as well left no doubt about Rommel's participation in the July 20 plot. Hitler gave him the choice between death by poison now or a trial before the people's court. Actually, of course, there was no choice. The Führer was determined to keep from the German people the fact that their most popular general had plotted to overthrow him and to make peace. The two generals made it quite clear that if Rommel insisted on standing trial, reprisals would be taken against Frau Rommel and Manfred. On the other hand, if he let himself be quietly poisoned now, his family would be spared and receive all honors and pensions due the family of a German Field Marshal.

With ghoulish precision Burgdorf had outlined for Rommel the last fine details of the plan. On the drive to Ulm a poison would be given him which killed within three seconds. Afterward he would be delivered to a hospi-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tal in Ulm and a message would go to the world that he had died suddenly of the after-effects of his injuries.

In that upstairs room Rommel was able to divulge details of the diabolical plot to two others—his aide, Captain Aldinger, and Manfred. Then these three went downstairs.

In the little entrance hall Rommel let himself be helped into his great coat. He put on his cap, a little jauntily as usual. They handed him his gloves and his baton. Then flanked by Manfred and Aldinger he walked out to the car where his assassins waited. He stepped into the car first; the two generals followed. Then the car, with the SS man at the wheel, drove off.

In all the annals of the Third Reich no scene exposes more flagrantly the psychological climate on which Hitler thrived. Here was no hapless Jew helpless in the hands of the Gestapo. Here was a German Field Marshal, complete with baton, the glory of his army, a legend all over the world for his courage. Nor was he lost among hostile strangers in a big city. He was in a little village where everyone was proud of him; he was in his own home surrounded by those nearest and dearest to him. And yet this man meekly let himself be taken away to his death. Why didn't someone in the house grab a gun and have a go at the two generals? It might not have saved Rommel and probably would have destroyed them all, for later it became known that SS-manned motorcars were posted nearby. Still, such dramatic action would have defeated Hitler's plan to conceal the fact that the most popular of his generals had plotted against him. It might have been the call to a general revolt. But apparently Germans of all classes were so numbed by the terror of the regime that no such gesture was even contemplated.

So nothing interfered with General Burgdorf's timetable. At 25 minutes after one he and Maisel delivered Rommel to the hospital in Ulm. He was already dead. The chief physician proposed an autopsy, but Burgdorf said quickly: "Do not touch the body. Berlin has arranged for everything."

What exactly happened on that drive will probably remain a mystery. Burgdorf perished with Hitler in the cellar of the Reich chancellery. Maisel, who is still a prisoner in the United States zone of Germany, and the SS driver insist that they were made to leave the car for a moment and on their return found Rommel dying.

At the state funeral on October 17 the assembly, studded with Nazi chieftains and high officers, behaved with the solemn decorum suitable to the occasion. Field Marshal Von Rundstedt delivered the oration in Hitler's place. Frau Rommel, pale and grim, had refused Von Rundstedt's arm, and a nameless tension threatened to burst through the thin veneer of well-bred punctilio. She had confided in a few intimates, but no one knew who, of all those solemn faced gauleiters, generals, and SS leaders, had a hand in the murder.

Rommel lies buried in the little cemetery at Herrlingen. Against a backdrop of greenery stands a wooden marker in the shape of the Iron Cross. What could Rommel do for his country if he were alive now? No answer comes from this quiet grave.

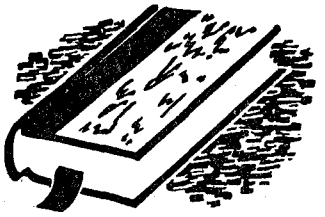
The young school teacher had just finished telling a small boy the story of a lamb who had strayed from the flock and had been eaten by a wolf.

"You see," she said, "had the lamb been obedient and stayed in the flock, it would not have been eaten by the wolf, would it?"

"No, ma'am," answered the boy. "It would have been eaten by us."

—Watchmen Examiner

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



JASPER R. LEWIS

Books in brief

Russell Brines, Associated Press reporter who spent 22 months in a Japanese internment camp, has written his views of Japan today, under MacArthur's administration. *MacArthur's Japan* (Lippincott, $3.50), is frankly full of admiration for the general, as it should be. There are, however, places where the author has laid his hero open to the cries of "egotist." Describing the staff of advisers to the general, the latter's sage remark that his "major advisers have boiled down almost to two men—George Washington and Abraham Lincoln" is quoted. In the same interview, pointing out that Napoleon was a genius on the battlefield, but in political affairs lost his own excellent ideas listening to his advisers, MacArthur says: "I find the same thing in political affairs." In the light of Brines' admitted long friendship with the general, some manifestations of esteem must be permitted, but I'd rather history compared MacArthur to Napoleon instead of the general himself.

In his report on the workings of S.C.A.P. and the job of administering Japan in a democratic fashion, he has given full approval to government supervision of commerce and industry. Possibly that part of the job was done as well as it might be under any bureaucracy, but it was far from perfect, and currently remains so.

The emperor, according to Brines, has been subtly used politically as propaganda for our purposes. In many ways precedents have been broken by the emperor himself, under the tutelage of MacArthur's administration. Whether these were genuine or not, only time will tell, but the Japanese are masters at pretense. It is worthy of note that some Americans feel that way. Alva C. Carpenter, head of S.C.A.P.'s legal section, is quoted as believing "they would do it again."

The story of the criminal trials reviews Japanese aggression since the early 1930's and is evidence of the easy forgiveness of Western peoples. The trials made an excellent sounding board for the captive Japanese leaders to address their own people, for future use.

The compulsory breakup of the Zaibatsu, or the class controlling industry, sounds promising. According to this report, we have been successful in over-throwing the Mitsui's and Mitsubishi's, forcing the sale of the stock of their many companies to small investors. It is reminiscent of the great trust-busting days days here, when the naughty corporations were dissolved, probably with considerable ultimate profit to the owners.

One healthy sign may be noted in the growth of labor unions; they are estimated to have over six million members in 1948. They may prove a more settling factor in Japan's affairs—as far as peace or war is concerned—than the emperor. Here, however, S.C.A.P. has had to "encourage leftists in order to find war-free leaders for a labor movement. . . ."

Politically, much progress has been made, according to Brines, through the application of the "MacArthur Constitution." Again, whether these reforms will endure is problematical, although one may differ in the opinion that "most of the thinking . . . . for this change had to come from the Americans." There were Japanese residents here before the war who undoubtedly had some democratic ideas, if permitted by both American and Japanese bureaucrats to find a way to use them.

On the topics of schooling, medicine, and disease prevention the book is also highly optimistic, although admitting the great lag in Japanese efforts. In his concluding pages Brines realistically doubts if Japan "will ever reach a type of democracy envisioned in the West." He sees the country as a typical oriental, opportunistic nation, one that should make a reliable ally. Aside from that, "the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

best guarantee of a peaceful Japan is the maintenance of an airtight blockade on vital raw materials." That is the meat in the nutshell.

* * *

Helen Mears, on the other hand, is belligerent about the whole accepted story of American-Japanese relations. In *Mirror for Americans: Japan* (Houghton Mifflin, $3.50), she has her fling at Secretary Hull and frankly states we were only waiting—and wishing—for Japan to start the fireworks. Pearl Harbor was not the beginning of a war, but only one move in a war already being waged. In a sense, that is correct, but it hardly justifies the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor, which the author seems to condone.

Again, Miss Mears feels that while at first we were justified in feeling a "righteous indignation against the Japanese war machine that had bombed civilians in China," by the end of the war we had lost that "moral advantage." That doubtless is directed against the use of the atom bomb. At this point patience is required of the reader, who might ask Miss Mears whether the bombings were justified if they ended the war and saved American lives.

She apparently thinks our administration of Occupied Japan is two-faced, which it may well be, of necessity. For her, "Occupied Japan was a country devastated by war; subject to vast reparations, ... with millions homeless." Or is that a typographical error and should it read "China," "Korea," the "Dutch East Indies," or some other place? She even goes back to criticize our conduct of the war itself. "What we don't appear to know is that a very high percentage of these (men, warships, and planes), were lost after the Japanese aggressive war machine was already decisively defeated." Again, "the Japanese on Okinawa were fighting to defend their homeland from invasion."

Miss Mears proves that the Japanese are not "traditionally aggressive." "There is not a scrap of evidence to substantiate the charge that the Japanese people are inherently savage and fond of war. In fact, the history of their country and their traditional civilization are conclusive evidence against it." In our occupation we have instituted a system of "Thought Control" which she finds no different than the previous Japanese control, except in purpose. Just why we should not use that medium is not made clear unless, of course, Japan is not a defeated belligerent.

Similarly, even in discussing pre-war Japan, Miss Mears finds reasons for defending her. Considering our current needs for exports and comparing them with Japanese goals before the war, she finds that "their demands . . . . were more modest. They did not ask for a progressively higher standard of living. They merely asked for a living."

There is much more to the same effect, including the suggestion that our statesmen should have foreseen the Russian menace and built up a friendship with Japan long ago to offset it. Without doubt there are some points about which Miss Mears is justified in her criticism of our part, but on the weight of evidence it would appear a waste of sympathy. Some hundreds of thousands of Americans who fought in the Pacific theatre might also find it difficult to accept her opinions.

BRIEFER COMMENT

POLITICS

Jorge García-Granados went to Palestine as a member of the United Nations Special Committee; the "drama" as he saw it is unfolded in *The Birth of Israel* (Knopf, $3.00). The author is warmly pro-Jewish in his sympathies and his sympathies find ready expression throughout the book. Dr. García Granados represented Guatemala at the United Nations. Nonetheless, he gives a frank description of the petty politics and intrigue that hamper that august group.

In Palestine, the Guatemalan statesman interviewed Jews from all countries and in every walk of life. He saw as much of the Arab side as the Arabs permitted and held secret meetings with Jewish resistance groups as well. His disgust with British police-state

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

methods and the shocking state of British "justice" is clearly expressed.

Bernard Joseph, Military Governor of Jewish Jerusalem, writes a more academic study of *British Rule in Palestine* (Public Affairs Press, $3.75). He outlines the history of the Promised Land from the Balfour Declaration to World War II. The legal basis of the British mandate is clarified and the duties of Great Britain as mandatory power are explored. British White Papers are discussed in detail as are the various plans for solving the Palestine dilemma.

Although Mr. Joseph devotes a chapter to Great Britain's failure, his book is less partial and less ardent than that of the Guatemalan statesman. As a leading member of the Palestine bar, Dr. Joseph is perhaps more accustomed to the pathos that is Palestine.

Both books provide excellent background information on a troubled area of our world today.

The Diary of Pierre Laval (Scribner's, $3.50), edited and prefaced by his daughter, attempts to answer the charges that were brought against the man who was premier of France during the German occupation. While he was in prison awaiting trial, he tried to make his defense. The book contains captured German documents as well as letters and documents of historic value which have been selected to help bear out Laval's contention that his sole motives for his actions were patriotism and a desire to minimize the sufferings of France and the French.

How well he does this is somewhat open to debate. Most people agree that no patriot would act as Laval did for any reason. Naturally the diary only defends Laval against the charges of treason and does not go into the proof of these charges. As a result, the book standing by itself appears to bear out some of the author's contentions. Only history can really bring out the truth. Most of our evidence is against Laval. In the meantime, this is a book worth much to the political scientist.

FICTION

Argentina during the last part of the nineteenth century is the scene of a colorful story of the last of the gauchos. Goya, hero of *Way of a Gaucho,* by Herbert Childs (Prentice-Hall, $3.00), lived the exciting life of a Robin Hood. The new civilization just beginning on the pampas, the "gringoes," and the new customs marked the last days of the old free gaucho who followed his master without question, lived, killed, and loved like a man and died without fear. This is a good adventure story and a tender love story.

Henry Castor has written a story of American family life during the Civil War years. In *The Spanglers* (Doubleday, $3.00), he describes a family, with the normal number of good, bad and indifferent members, and the external forces that shape their lives. This is a well written story with all the earmarks of careful research both as to the Pennsylvania Dutch background of Lancaster and the Civil War battle scenes.

Two rather unusual novels, both about woman, both somewhat similar in tone, are well worth the reading. *Georgiana* (New Directions, $2.50), has a most unusual girl as its heroine. Starting at no particular point in her life, it ends the same way, with flash-backs filling in most of the gaps in its narrative-type style. Maude Hutchins has written a fresh and sensitive novel with interesting characters, as interesting to read about as Georgiana herself.

Sara Monday of *Herself Surprised,* by Joyce Cary (Harper's, $3.00), was indeed an amiable woman. No one was more surprised at all the things that happened to her than she was herself. Born an ignorant country girl, married to a gentleman, learning to be a lady, she never considered consequences, but acted in a fashion bound to please most men. The result brought her lovers, an interesting life, and eventual disgrace. The novel style of Joyce Cary catches the "little girl about to have a big surprise" tone of Sara Monday.

When people go to a summer hotel for a change and a rest, the bell boys get the change and the hotels get the rest.

—*Fraternal Monitor*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Moveless the Mountain Burns

The road lifts toward the sun
And we who ride
Have more light than we ask.

The road goes up, the sun
Is more than halfway
Down the day, the year.

Moveless the mountain burns
With twofold fire:
Fall and the falling sun.

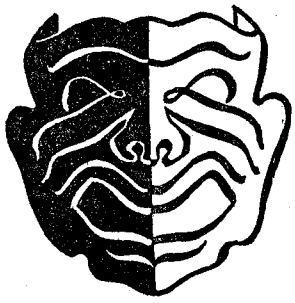
Any Wind Now

Any wind now is a wind toward winter,
A wind at the back to hurry a walker
On where he has to a little faster,
Or if he goes the other way,
If he tries to go the other way,
A wind in the face a little colder
Maybe than he remembers October.

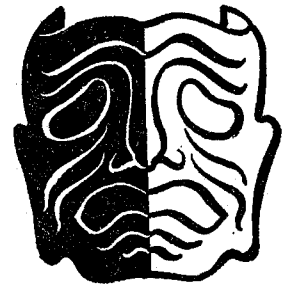
Any wind now is away from summer
Though leaves and fruit of summer linger
A day or couple of short days longer.
A wind to put an end to harvest,
To dry the cornshocks and the rowen,
To puff the sailboat from the harbor
Or into harbor home from sailing.

ROBERT FRANCIS

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



The THEATRE ARTS



by John Gassner

The theatrical season of 1948-49 opened officially with Bessie Breuer's semi-clinical drama, *Sundown Beach,* and few seasons within recent memory opened with so honorable a play. On the surface, at least, Bessie Breuer's play was an honest exhibit and a sympathetic approach to an important and touching situation. That its picture of the plight of the mental casualties of the Air Force proved unsatisfactory was not the result of bad exposition, want of interest, or sensational vulgarization, but simply of poor playwriting. It is only just, however, to concede that no dramatist short of genius could have improved upon Miss Breuer's treatment of her subject to such a degree that the play would have been satisfactory. *Sundown Beach* is one of those stage pieces that seem boresome and even inept because they should never have been conceived as plays at all, whereas they might have made very respectable novels. In the theatre, a series of parallel stories, one for each psychoneurotic veteran in the case of *Sundown Beach,* simply cannot fail to make a play diffuse and repetitive as drama. After the first act, which stated the clinical case histories of the characters, virtually everything that happened in the next two acts was predictable. What was not predictable was the cure of one aviator and his reconciliation with his wife; and if this came as a surprise, it is precisely because it was psychologically dubious.

In the last analysis, it was even doubtful whether the manifest sincerity of the author should be accepted at face value. Miss Breuer's writing would have been more convincing if it had been less addicted to the slick magazine formulae of "Love" as the great panacea and of promiscuity as the inevitable salve for a state of desperation. A more convincing seriousness on the writer's part would have given us less sentimentality, for it is always the signature of second-rate writing that it wallows in pity instead of abounding in insight. It is always easier to be sorry for people than to understand them. It is also always less exacting to deplore a situation than to analyze it. Arthur Laurents' *Home of the Brave* gave the theme of psychoneurosis among soldiers a vastly more challenging treatment because its author was not content to rest his argument on the pathetic nature of his character's illness. The young actors who struggled with *Sundown Beach,* after rehearsing it for many months in an acting class, found themselves frequently floundering in a morass of suffering from which it was almost impossible to extricate themselves even with the help of so brilliant a stage director as Elia Kazan.

As new productions multiplied, only to be cut down by the New York critics, the present reviewer became convinced that the unexciting nature of the early plays was largely attributable to the absence of an enzyme—that elusive but indispensable thing we can variously call a "conviction," an "inspiration," or a "hope." Without this, the bread of drama fails to rise. If one playwright did make an effort to employ the little enzyme, as Marc Connelly did in his *Story for Strangers,* it was such a tired and ineffectual germ that the play would have been no worse without it. Mr. Connelly, who evidently intended to dispense sweetness and light to a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

benighted world, converted a townful of objectionable characters by making a horse talk. Perhaps he could have convinced us of the possibility of this conversion if the characters had been people rather than stereotypes, and if the horse had talked some horse-sense to them. That admirable animal failed to utter a sound other than a man-made neigh somewhere from the wings of the stage. Mr. Connelly also made the mistake of starting with his climax, the blessedness of the converted town, instead of leading up to the beatification of his Babbitts—which is poor dramaturgy. In the last analysis, moreover, the author of the memorable *Green Pastures* is under suspicion of having no more conviction than his inferiors, the hack playwrights, since he proclaimed a revelation with great fanfare at the beginning only to provide none in the body of his story. The suspicion that our playwrights had nothing to say was, moreover, quickly confirmed by Gertrude Tonkonogy's *Town House,* based on John Cheever's *New Yorker* stories, and *Time for Elizabeth,* on which Norman Krasna collaborated with the ineffable Groucho Marx.

Town House enjoyed the services of George S. Kaufman as director, and his clever hand was responsible for virtually everything tolerable or good in the production. It certainly bustled about a good deal, and it scored little points continually—without making any particular point for itself. The play revolved around three couples who shared an old town house in New York. One young couple tried to cut themselves away from the safe harbor of Baltimore aristocracy only to find themselves helplessly adrift. Another was trying to start a national magazine (the Lord only knows why). The third couple, admirably played by Hiram Sherman and Mary Wickes, who were continually amusing in their own right, displayed a talent for getting themselves and everybody else into hot water by their naïve enthusiasm for progressive education. Since these three couples were sharing an old town house, which they couldn't afford separately, the humor lay in their inability to make a go of their venture in cooperative housing, until a forced happy landing ended their separate and collective imbroglios. There was actually nothing wrong in what transpired on the stage, but it was difficult to discover what, if anything, was right with it—what was being scrutinized or what was being resolved to justify all the fuss and feathers of Mr. Kaufman's stage movement. If tempests are permissible in teapots, and if *Town House* was not entirely devoid of entertainment, so that it is a likely candidate for summer theatricals and amateur productions, it was nevertheless plain that the professional theatre is no longer a place where a muddle is considered amusing enough to be patronized.

Time for Elizabeth was an even better play for the non-professional theatre, but it proved to be another example of misplaced attention on the part of talented people. It started off cleverly enough with a business executive jettisoning his cargo and going to Florida, and it was spiced with phrases regarded as reliably amusing. One could be particularly partial to the line in which Otto Kruger recovered his respect for New York City and dwelt on its special virtue—that of having "four seasons." Mr. Kruger discovered that life in the Florida sunshine can be strenuously boring, and the efforts of Katherine Alexander and Mr. Kruger to make the best of a bad bargain were mildly entertaining. Soon, however, the playwright became blatant and the executive returned to his desk in the big city as a result of increasingly synthetic complications. The germ of an idea was to be found somewhere in the play but it was planted in sand, became churned up by a tide of banalities, and was finally deposited where no one could hope to find it.

No relief was in store for the weary playgoer even from the early musicals, except in the case of the intimate revue, *Small Wonder,* and even this was only a partial blessing. Both *Heaven on Earth* and *Magdalena* were large and generally torpid exhibitions, and both were consequently less gratifying than the unpretentious little revue *Small Wonder.* If there were elements in the mammoth musicals that might titillate the none-too-exacting customers of musical entertainment, they were, nonetheless, not of a kind to make musical comedy endearing.

Heaven on Earth offered the assorted talents of night-club entertainers, who are well endowed for brief appearances before patrons, pleasantly chewing their cud but are

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

apt to pall in continuous performance. The luminary of the proceedings at *Heaven on Earth* was Peter Lind Hayes, an accomplished gentleman who provided finished examples of his routine, the best of these being his impersonation of a maudlin tramp. The imbecile heart in all of us would have liked to speed him on his way while he played the good fairy to two enamored victims of the housing shortage. But, unhappily, speed was precisely what the production begrudged him and nearly everybody else in the cast. David Burns, whose personality is unfailingly comic and whose timing amounts to real virtuosity, did as well as he could by the stereotype of a blackhearted real-estate operator, and Irwin Corey included a touch of poet's frenzy in his mad impersonation of a bedevilled commissioner of housing. But only one person in the cast was able to triumph over the torpor of the play, a young woman, Dorothy Jarnac. She deserves a niche somewhere even if one can't expect the Players' Club to hang her portrait next to Booth's. The best scene belonged to her, when she took a letter "in shortfoot" and did with her feet what the creators of the musical failed to do with their heads—use them for the purpose of creating an intelligent libretto.

Magdalena, subtitled "A Musical Adventure," cannot be put in the same class with *Heaven on Earth,* for it is a work of "art." But it struck this reviewer as bad art, because it lacked an all-embracing form, an unerringly pursued point, and that ultimate refinement of taste which is nothing more than knowing when enough is enough and when even a little is too much. These deficiencies were apparent in nearly everything that passed for humor and beauty in this musical, except when the inimitable comedienne Irra Petina held the stage by dint of her vibrant personality. *Magdalena* had one of the most distinguished, if rather awkward, scores Broadway has heard, which is as it should be, since Heitor Villa Lobos, the celebrated Latin-American composer, wrote it. The talented Jack Cole's dances, though hardly brilliant, were colorful and exciting, and Dorothy Sarnoff's performance as an Indian girl who wavers between primitive passionateness and her recently adopted Christianity was generally delightful. Jack Raitt was, in the main, a spirited rebel and lover, and his prowess as a singer was even greater than in *Carousel.* Sharaff, the costumer, was in his glory, and the entire musical was munificent in display. *Magdalena* even made a bid for our democratic sympathies with its presentation of a native rebellion against exploitation in a Latin-American General's emerald mines. If, nevertheless, *Magdalena* failed to live up to its West Coast reputation, it was because New York remains unimpressed by elephantiasis ever in a gilt stocking. The libretto was also painfully devoid of critical wariness. It relied on an old-fashioned operetta humor that had lost its savor even before Francis Joseph II joined his ancestors.

The only genuine brightness and contemporaneous style in the musical field belonged to *Small Wonder,* and if the results were not entirely as gratifying as one might have expected, the reason lies in the current tendency to abate critical intelligence, a tendency present both in the theatre and in the jittery state of the union. Ever since the *Garrick Gaieties* and *The Grand Street Follies* in the gay 1920's (peace to its ashes!), we have longed for the simple, intimate revue as perhaps the most palatable dish that could be set before us. So many of the 14 course gala dinners have continued to prove indigestible, so many of them have served tripe in Tiffany silver, that the simple but tasty fare prepared by the chefs of the little revues are likely to savor of manna. This was true of *Pins and Needles* and, to some degree, of *Meet the People,* and the current little revue belongs to the same class. *Small Wonder* tried to be both small and wonderful, but it is less difficult to report that it is small than that it is wonderful.

Tom Elwell, playing the average little man facetiously named "The Normal Neurotic," is engagingly disarming, if not precisely overwhelming, and some of the numbers he languidly introduces are well conceived and ably performed. In the first act, a sketch about the wealthy "cowboys" of the Southwest, "Ballad for Billionaires," is entertainingly jaunty, and there is much to be said for the "Voice of America" travesty entitled "D-e-m-o-c-r-a-c-y." The revue also contains

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

well scored points in spoofs on *I Remember Mama,* Hemingway's literary style, recent post-war fiction of the morbid variety, and the popular double-decker historical novels. The second act picks up toward the end with an amusing travesty on modern advertising and a fine parody on foreign and domestic films, "The Happy Ending." This act also contains an affecting song about the bleak life of an ordinary girl, by the talented Mary McCarty, who acquits herself ably in her caricatures of the sultry heroines of screen melodrama.

Still, the uneven character of this revue cannot be easily overlooked, and between the illuminated areas there are a good many spots left in semi-darkness, one of which—a dance number called *Badaroma*—would be more acceptable if it had been cast into outer darkness. Little distinction marks the lyrics and dances, and many of the sketches are stretched beyond their maximum tensile effectiveness. The inventory of half-successes and failures is disproportionately long, and the evening as a whole is nowhere as bountiful as it should be. The shortcomings have their source in something more than uncertain craftsmanship on the part of a group of young performers. The satire suffers from a want of animus, which in turn suggests a want of conviction. *Small Wonder* is bright but rather hollow, and it whistles in a vacuum. What it satirizes is inconsequential; therefore, the satire is inconsequential. Its creators, it is true, make a big splash, but they make it in a small pond. The absurdities on which they sharpen their teeth are neither new nor challenging, and *Small Wonder* reminds us too much of little theatre entertainment in the days when the so-called "sophistication" of the Scott Fitzgerald generation was in fine fettle.

A teacher in a school just outside Belfast, Ireland, tells of a pupil of his who had been taken to the launching of His Majesty's Aircraft Carrier *Bulwark*. He wrote the following account of the big moment: "The Countess broke a bottle of champagne against the bow and then, to the delight of the crowd, she slid slowly and majestically down the greasy slipway into the sea."

—*Belfast Newsletter*

His car and her car met head on. Both drivers got out and, with that fine courtesy so characteristic of motorists nowadays, both began to apologize profusely.

"I'm so sorry," said the woman. "It was all my fault."

"Not at all, madam," the man responded with gallantry. "I was to blame myself."

"But I insist the fault was mine. I was on your side of the road."

"That may be true; but, my dear madam, I am responsible for the collision. I saw you coming blocks away, and I had ample opportunity to dart down a side street."

—*Atlantic Two Bells*

A young Scotsman went to the telegraph office one morning and wired a proposal of marriage to his sweetheart. After spending the entire day and part of the night waiting, he was finally rewarded by an affirmative reply.

"If I were you," suggested the operator who delivered the message, "I'd think twice before I'd marry a girl who kept me waiting all day for my answer."

"Na, Na," replied the young Scot. "The lass who waits for the night rates is the lass for me."

—*Cappers Weekly*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

COUNTRY COMMENT

"Happily, and hopefully for the human race, they are in what we believe to be perfect health now."

The speaker is Dr. H. G. Reineke, of Cincinnati, an X-ray and radium specialist, and he is speaking of two goats, Satan and Adolph, Bikini survivors. My information comes from *The New York Times* of September 19, 1948.

Found dying of radiation sickness, the two goats were flown to a hospital where for 30 days they received daily transfusions of blood, and for another 30 days transfusions every other day. For 90 days running they had injections of penicillin.

It would be interesting to know whether other X-ray and radium specialists are as optimistic as Dr. Reineke. I myself am not particularly optimistic about any feature of the human scene, but if I were to pick out the most hopeful thing in view, it would not be anything involving so many blood transfusions. Perhaps my thinking is pessimistic and cynical, but to my mind it would have been happier for all concerned if the goats had died on the spot.

After all, how can a goat be sure, when the next bomb is about to go off, that it will be picked up by hospital attendants; and if picked up, that transportation to the hospital will be available; and if transportation, that there will be room in the hospital at a time when so many goats will be clamoring for admission? How can it be sure that there still will be a hospital? Surely only the most hopeful of goats, in such a crisis, could look forward confidently to blood transfusions for 60 days and penicillin for 90. Finally, even if the lucky goat got all the treatment it needed, what assurance would there be that another bomb might not go off and undo all the good work?

I hope I may be pardoned for writing about goats twice within a year. My only excuse is that the future of goats and the future of mankind are so intimately linked.

Some readers may recall that my former concern was with man's inveterate habit of putting all goats on the left. Perhaps the atom bomb has made the whole question of right and left irrelevant. It doesn't make much difference to a goat which side it is on when an atom bomb is poising overhead.

By contrast with a Bikini goat, the figure of the ancient scapegoat is almost refreshing. Unlike the hundreds of experimental victims of today, the scapegoat was a single sufferer, and he didn't necessarily suffer too much. His burden was only human sins. Having been driven to the wilderness and so beyond human ken, he could shake off his sinful load and live to a ripe age. His felicity was wholly independent of airplane transportation, hospitals, blood transfusions, and penicillin. If I were a goat and could choose between being a religious scapegoat and a scientific atom goat, it wouldn't take me any time to make my choice.

Happily and hopefully for the race of goats, the human race may not be around to pester it much longer. When that post-atomic time comes, a small island in the South Pacific (if any islands are left) might be a very good place for a goat to dwell. There he could browse and ruminate and perpetuate himself unto who knows what generation with nothing to trouble him except a few flies and the immemorial accidents of the seasons.

ROBERT FRANCIS

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

YES!

By ELLIOT GORHAM

Forum: Must Western Eur

EVERY major issue between the Western Powers and the Soviet Union points to the possibility, if not the inevitability, of another world war. Under these circumstances, it is our obvious duty and responsibility to prevent such a conflict if possible and to prepare for it in any case.

Theoretically, and only theoretically, the international organization of the United Nations exists to prevent another war and to punish any nation which attempts to start armed conflict. But the United Nations, born a weakling, is failing fast. Even on problems such as the civil war in Palestine, where there is no substantial difference of opinion between the Soviet Union and the United States, the United Nations has not been able to enforce its partition solution.

Where there are major conflicts of interest between the Big Powers, the United Nations is powerless to mediate. Disagreements over Greece, Iran, China, Japan, and Korea, to mention but a few, have all shown the weaknesses of the United Nations organization. The outstanding problems of the day are the regulation of the atom bomb and the access to Berlin. In both cases, such pressure has been put on the United Nations as to raise fears for its very life.

After months of negotiations, the United States, Great Britain, and France finally put the Berlin controversy before the Security Council:

> The Soviet Government has taken upon itself the sole responsibility for creating a situation . . . . which constitutes a threat to international peace and security. . . . The Governments of the United States, the United Kingdom, and France . . . . find themselves obliged to refer the action of the Soviet Government to the Security Council of the United Nations.

On Wednesday, September 29, 1948, formal notifications were sent to the Secretary General. Russia was specifically accused of violating Chapter VII of the Charter, under which the Security Council is empowered to impose economic and political sanctions or even to use military force against an aggressor. On October 25, the Soviet Union vetoed a compromise resolution in the Security Council, calling for settlement of the Berlin dispute. Although the United States, France, and Great Britain have decided to leave the case in the Security Council, it is clear that neither this nor any other question involving real differences between the Western Powers and the Soviet Union can be settled by the United Nations. Take the control of atomic energy as another case in point. The Atomic Energy Commission was established in January, 1946, with instructions to:

> Proceed with the utmost dispatch to make specific proposals for control of atomic energy . . . . for the elimination from national armaments of atomic weapons and of all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction.

Two and one half years later, the Commission was defunct. After 220 meetings, it gave up its attempt to work out a system for controlling atom bombs because "it is . . . . apparent that this deadlock cannot be broken at the commission level." This deadlock between the United States and Russia apparently cannot be broken at any level. Yet, the Great Powers have agreed to revive the Commission.

If the United Nations cannot solve the major issues between the Great Powers today, it will be powerless to prevent a major war. All the international goodwill in the world, all the idealism, all the pacificism, all the Christianity, will not eliminate the basic causes of warfare between the Soviet Union and the Western world. Goodwill cannot defeat armies, and idealists of all nations will be

[*Continued on page* 294]

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Ve Join a ean Alliance?

THE Western European alliance of Great Britain, France, Belgium, The Netherlands, and Luxembourg is purely and simply a *military* alliance. Governments expecting a long interval of peace do not thus join together. Joining a military alliance, in other words, is a desperate last resort against the threat of superior force. And, if the truth be told, it is not a satisfactory resort at best.

Only three and a half years ago, the grim fighting of World War II drew to a bloody close. The peace treaties ending the holocaust have not yet been signed. The United Nations organization, which was to bring peace and the Four Freedoms to the whole world, is less than four years old. What incredible cynicism, then, leads nations to put their trust once again in military leagues, in power politics, in the force of arms? What danger threatens so overwhelmingly as to lead men to forget the lessons of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and prepare for World War III?

The nations of Western Europe have drawn together and have invited the United States to join them because they believe that World War III is coming, that the United Nations organization has already failed, and that a military alliance offers some measure of security. Those who would have the United States join this league believe these premises, with the further supposition that in the next war we shall fight against the Soviet Union, and shall need "Western Union" as an advance guard.

If we accept all these premises, our membership in the Western European alliance is a foregone conclusion. But before we fall into easy error let us examine the paragraph above more closely. First of all, World War III is not inevitable until the fighting begins. Those who believe in its inevitability declare that the United States and the Soviet Union cannot settle their differences amicably. This is not true. The two Great Powers are fortunately as divided in the realm of space as they are in the realm of ideas. If the Western Hemisphere is enough for the United States, then the Eastern hemisphere should be enough for the U.S.S.R. If the United States feels empowered as well as obligated to take the responsibility for the continents of North and South America, why should Russia not feel the same way toward Europe? There is to date no evidence offered proving that the Soviet Union is preparing to clash with the United States. And certainly we are not prepared to argue that the United States will take the offensive against a peaceful-minded Russia. Honest differences of opinion can be settled by men of good will without armed force. And if such men are aware also of the fact that no nation can win in World War III, there need be no such war.

NO!

By JONATHAN ROBERTS

THE SOVIET UNION

Sane men do not commit suicide, nor will a sane nation deliberately commit itself to atomic warfare. The Soviet Union was devastated by the last war and it will take her people years to rebuild. The living standard of Russia is still far below the expectations of her leaders and the production of sufficient consumer goods is still in the distant future. Under the circumstances, it is highly unlikely that the Soviet Union will voluntarily add to its troubles by starting a war against the United States of America thousands of miles away. Add the fact that the United States still has a monopoly on atom bomb production and World War III seems avoidable indeed.

In the second place, the United Nations is still a functioning organization. At the present time, the so-called "veto provision" which hamstrings the Security Council stands in the way of effective action by that organ, but the veto is by no means a necessary feature of the United Nations Charter. It was inserted to

[*Continued on page* 296]

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

[*Continued from page 292*]

just as dead as the rest of us when atomic warfare starts.

If we accept the premises outlined above, that the United Nations is weak, that it is unable to prevent a major conflict, then we must accept the possibility of a third World War. And if we see that war as even a remote possibility, we must prepare for it now, while there is still time.

The United States was psychologically and physically unprepared for the outbreak of World War II. Only the years intervening between the German march into Poland and the attack on Pearl Harbor gave us any opportunity to prepare defenses. Both pacifists and isolationists had prevented maintaining adequate armaments in the years before 1939. Our internal defenses—our army and navy—were shamefully neglected. Our external defenses—alliances with friendly nations—were simply non-existent. We did not join the League of Nations; we avoided "entangling alliances"—in short, we behaved as though we had no international responsibilities.

RESPONSIBILITY

Today our attitude is far different. The United States is at last aware of its position as one of the world's First Powers. Internationally, we took a lead in establishing the organization of the United Nations. We recognized the responsibilities of the victor nation to the vanquished and left occupation armies in Japan and in Germany, to aid in peaceful reconstruction. We offered war-torn Europe a plan for economic reconstruction, and today we bear the burden for its cost.

At home, we are also aware of our changed position. The internal defenses of the United States are not being neglected in this post-war world. The army and the navy are being strengthened constantly. Scientific research continues for weapons of defense and offense. The atom bomb is being "improved" as we struggle to keep our lead in atomic warfare.

Few pacifists and few isolationists challenge these measures today. Yet there is a group which, well-meaning or otherwise, stands in the way of our complete preparedness. That group is made up of all those who for one reason or another believe that our best defense is "cooperation" with the Soviet Union, even when such "cooperation" means appeasement and capitulation. This group views our every defense measure from the Russian point of view, fearful lest it antagonize the Soviet Union. To this group, any military alliance that excludes the U.S.S.R. is a mistake, since the Russians will not appreciate it.

Another group condemns out of hand any action by the United States which seems to sidestep the United Nations organization. Although some of the weaknesses of the United Nations are conceded, the claim is made that only through the United Nations can world peace be assured. Thus, the United States should have handed the United Nations the problem of atomic energy control, instead of insisting on the establishment of a special control commission. The United States should not have given direct aid to Greece. The United States should not have evolved the Marshall Plan single-handed.

The influence of these groups is considerable, yet the time has come to ignore them in order to secure our position in this post-war anarchic world. The United Nations cannot prevent a major war, nor could any other international body, unless the Soviet Union and the United States (to say nothing of lesser powers) were willing to surrender their sovereignty. This is out of the question. We must, therefore, depend externally on whatever military and economic alliances seem to us to offer the best protection against a potential aggressor. We must, in other words, ally ourselves *now* with the nations of Western Europe to make common military cause with them.

Why Western Europe? Our best military alliance can be made with the nations of Western Europe for four reasons: (1) Since our potential enemy is the Soviet Union and its satellites, Western Europe is strategically located to act as an advance guard for us in the event of war between the United States and Russia; (2) The economic and military potential of the nations of Western Europe is more adequate than the same potential in South America, where we might possibly look for military alliances; (3) The nations of Western Europe, including Great Britain, are

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

already taking important steps in the direction of military confederation, which we will be welcome to join at any time; (4) Unless we do join a Western military confederation, it is more than likely to collapse, leaving us with no protection in Europe against an expanding Soviet state.

WESTERN UNION

What plans have already been made for Western Union? Last March, Great Britain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg signed a 50-year treaty for military and economic cooperation. But they were reluctant to go ahead with military union without aid from the United States. Late in September, their Defense Ministers finally met in Paris to set up the framework of a Western military command. They established a "permanent staff organization" to "include the nucleus of a land, air, and naval command with a permanent military chairman." Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery was loaned to the organization for this purpose. The probable aim of the group is a mobile ground force of more than 500,000 men—45 divisions—and it is expected that the United States will provide the money and equipment for such a force on a self-help (à la Marshall Plan) basis. Reports from Washington indicate that our top-level military are prepared to support Western Union with money and with arms.

Although this small encouragement has accelerated European plans for the confederation, in the long run it will not be enough. In the opening days of World War II, hope was widespread in the United States that Lend-Lease would constitute our only help to the nations fighting the Axis. Thus we gave arms, ammunition, and money in the hope that our men would be spared, our country not endangered. Pearl Harbor taught us a lesson. But our present plans for supporting a Western Union "from a distance" show that the lesson is none too well remembered. Money and arms will not be enough. If we concede that the military confederation of Western Europe is necessary for Western Europe and strategically important for us, then we must *join* the union at once. It must be made clear to every nation of the world that the United States stands with Great Britain, France, and the Benelux nations. Lack of certainty in this respect encouraged Hitler to start World War II. No such encouragement should be given potential aggressors today.

There are no realistic, practical arguments against our joining the alliance of Western European Powers. It should be clearly understood that such an alliance will not impair the sovereignty of the United States one whit. Western Union will be a *military confederation* and *not a federal union.* Arguments against Western Union follow one of several lines: (1) We must get along with (appease) Russia (we have dealt with this line above); (2) We must not by-pass the United Nations. This argument ignores the frailty and futility of the United Nations. (3) We must avoid European entanglements and let Western Europe take care of itself. This argument represents a modification of our old-style isolationism and ignores the long-range bomber, the possibilities of bacteriological warfare, and the advantages of supporting Western Europe as a buffer.

Few Americans like to think of a third world war. As a nation we are opposed to the regimentation of military life. Because of our great expanse and our great natural wealth, we have never been forced to look upon warfare as a desperate but nonetheless justifiable method of bettering our people. Yet our innate dislike of war cannot alter the basic facts of twentieth-century living.

Power politics and, in the last analysis, only power politics, rules this world today. The United States is one of the Two Big Powers not because we are a democracy, not because we protect the individual, not because we are pacifists, but because the United States is one of the two strongest *military* powers in the world. And because behind our military lies the greatest industrial plant the world has ever seen.

In such a world, might makes right, and the only way we can assure ourselves that our concepts of "right" will prevail, is to back these concepts with adequate force. No compromise United Nations, no dream of a future world federation, will protect the American people and the American ideology against superior force.

Nor will our present monopoly of the atom

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bomb serve to substitute for military alliances. Within the next five years, it is more than likely that the Soviet Union will be able to match us in atom bomb production.

Truly, we can rely on no one method for securing ourselves against World War III. Because this is so, we must take *every* action that will strengthen our hand and make aggression look less desirable to those who might make war on us. Among the actions that will increase our war potential and may even lessen the possibility of a major war is an out-and-out, clear-cut alliance with the nations of Western Europe. Such an alliance will, of course, be an indication to Russia. But it will not prove that the United States is preparing to wage an aggressive war; it will show merely that we are determined to do all we can to protect ourselves and our friendly neighbor nations in any war emergency.

[*Continued from page* 293]

please both the U.S.S.R. and the United States and particularly to satisfy isolationist sentiment in the latter nation. Now, if the United States is ready to abandon its traditional isolation (and all signs point in this direction), then it should abandon it in favor of a hopeful world federation growing out of the United Nations, and not in favor of a reactionary military alliance.

In truth and in fact, no military alliance this world has yet seen has prevented war. If World War III is to come, Western Union and particularly an American-dominated Western Union, will only serve to accelerate its coming.

Military alliances accelerate war, and a military alliance between the United States and Western Europe will hasten the coming of World War III. It will frighten and anger the Soviet Union, already afraid of encirclement by the capitalist nations. From the Russian point of view, a nation thousands of miles from her borders will seem to be organizing a military coalition right on her doorstep. To the Soviet Union, the statement that the proposed alliance is "defensive" will ring hollow indeed! Fear is a cause of war's outbreak, and the proposed military alliance will add to Russian tension.

Further, the proposed alliance will accentuate the split between East and West—the two worlds which we are warned against. Having organized Europe into two armed camps, the United States and Russia will battle diplomatically for Asia, Africa, and India, in an effort to build up their own military strength. Instead of cooperative federations for economic and social progress, we shall see the growth of military leagues and armaments of all kinds. Indeed, my opponent makes much of the fact that the proposed alliance is "military" only, as though we should welcome *military* leagues instead of leagues for peaceful progress!

The military alliance will tend to lead us toward war because it will give the United States a false sense of security, so that compromise between East and West will seem less important. No defensive fortifications in Western Europe today can protect us from the atomic and biological warfare inevitable in World War III. No foot soldiers, indeed, no battleships, will avail against the terrible destruction ahead. Science, industry, and the airplane will be our defenses, and these need no military alliance to better themselves.

Our best defense in Western Europe is a far different type of alliance. To guarantee peaceful development, Europe should federate, so that the blessings of free migration, free trade, common coinage, and citizenship may extend to that war-torn continent. This federation should be formed so that *all* Europe, and not simply Western Europe, would feel free to join. The right of the nations of Eastern Europe to experiment with communism or Bolshevism should be guaranteed. No military or anti-Soviet implications should be made, nor should the United States interfere in any way with the new federation. Such a league would perhaps attract even Russia's satellites, since the Soviet Union would in time realize that a European federation was not anti-Soviet.

A European federation would be a far more powerful incentive to peace than any military alliance. Wars are caused in part by the basic unrest that grips hungry "have-not"

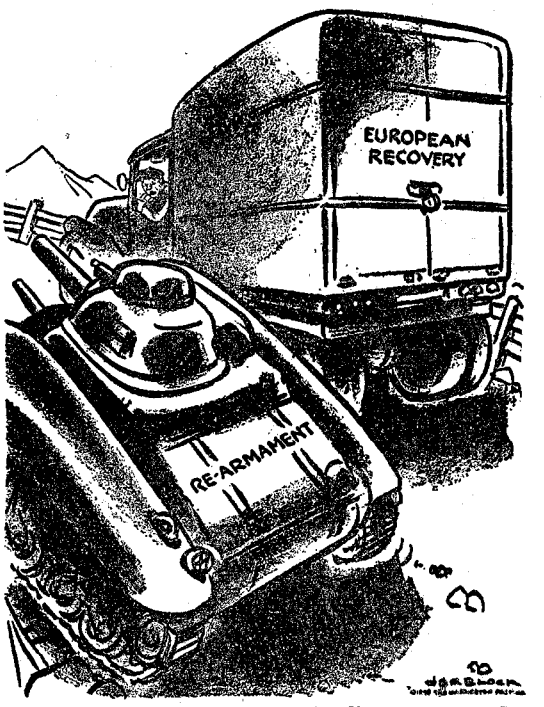
PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nations. The exhausted countries of Europe are breeding grounds for World War III, because to them a peaceful future offers little hope. Chaos is averted now only because of the helping hand of the United States in Western Europe and of the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe. Were American support withdrawn, the nations of Western Europe would be in desperate straits. They might even turn to communism and Soviet support to save themselves. Partly as a defense measure, then, the United States continues to support Western Europe under the Marshall Plan. But such aid cannot continue indefinitely. Perpetual support of Western Europe will condemn the United States to a progressively lower living standard. It will reduce the nations of Western Europe to a condition of vassalage. Only peaceful federation can restore Europe to a position of self-sufficiency and reduce the danger of war.

In the last analysis, American participation in a European military alliance is urged only by those who believe that the United States should and can defend herself against the threat of World War III. This hope is a dangerous illusion. We cannot protect ourselves against atomic warfare, nor can the nations of Western Europe protect us. In the next war there is little doubt that rocket-propelled atom bombs will play a prominent part. When we remember the horror of the German V-2 rocket bombs in Britain during World War II, we get some idea of what the next war will be like. Hiroshima and Nagasaki remind us further. And the problems of reconstruction show that today no nation *wins* a war; all nations lose. Tomorrow, there may be no nations left to win or to lose.

All of us are aware of these facts; most of us realize how close we are to the potential destruction of our whole civilization. Perhaps it is because the horror of World War III is too real, too close, that we close our eyes to our danger. In the face of all we know about atomic (and biological) warfare, there are still those who advocate "military alliances" and further armament. Calling themselves "realists," these well-meaning fools scoff at the United Nations and those who would try to strengthen it.

Yet the United Nations is the only real hope of mankind. Read that sentence again. Unless we can prevent another war. many of us are doomed to violent death, and many others to a slow and horrible withering away. The only *practical* way to stave off disaster is to make the United Nations work, to strengthen and support it to the best of our several abilities.



Herblock in *The Washington Post*

"WATCH IT, BUD"

A Western European alliance is impractical because it will not prevent war. Our joining it will give us no protection whatsoever. On the contrary, a military alliance will anger and frighten the Soviet Union and weaken our only chance of peaceful development. All of us wish to prevent the catastrophe of World War III. Let us take practical steps to ensure world peace. Let us support, not an exclusive West European union, but a Pan-European federation of states regardless of their political complexion. Let us not be misled by determinists, Marxian and otherwise, into believing in the "inevitability" of a third world war. We must throw all our support to the United Nations. Under no circumstances should we join a Western European military alliance!

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

To the Editor:

Sir:

In your issue of June, 1948, you have printed, under the title "The Come-back of Free Enterprise in France," an article written by Mr. Edwin Muller, which has been reproduced in *The Reader's Digest* and, with all ensuing consequences, in its French edition *Sélection du Reader's Digest.*

Reading of the passage dealing with the activities of our firm gave us quite a shock. The least we can say of the information given to Mr. Muller by "men with official position" is that it is both erroneous and biased.

In fact:

1. It is absolutely false to assert that the French government is giving Renault priority over Citroen in the allocation of raw materials and machine tools. The two firms are treated exactly on the same basis.

2. Stating that Citroen is making as many cars as Renault is entirely inaccurate.

As a rule, we do not like to give figures when one of our competitors is concerned, but, in the present occurrence, we think we are entitled to do so. The figures you will find underneath emanate from official and public documents.

The production of Citroen and Renault during the year 1947 has been:

	Citroen	Renault
Personal Cars	22,879	18,964
Trucks, Buses, Etc.	6,102	24,352
Total	28,981	43,316

For the period extending from January 1 to June 30, 1948, the production has been:

	Citroen	Renault
Personal Cars	16,772	12,888
Trucks, Buses, etc.	3,982	18,285
Total	20,754	31,173

3. As regards the management of our plant, the statute of the *Regie Nationale Des Usines Renault* is absolutely similar to that of all private firms. The centralization of the direction and coordination at the top are as strictly maintained as it was under its former private ownership.

4. If the general opinion is that Renault has cost the French government between two and three billion francs, we shall then be able to verify, once more, that public opinion is often wrong, perhaps because it has been misinformed.

Instead of spending the government money, the *Regie Nationale Des Usines Renault* brings annually huge sums to the nation's strongbox. Actually, our firm pays all the taxes that are paid by private concerns, including the commercial and industrial profit tax.

Contrary to what Mr. Muller may think and despite the fact that the financial year 1947 ended with a small loss—resulting from external circumstances entirely beyond our control—the balance-sheet of the three last years (1945, 1946, and 1947) shows a rather nice profit. After the amortization of considerable equipment, we have been in a position to distribute substantial sums among our personnel.

Trusting we have clearly stated our case and put it in its true light, we have too much confidence in the objectivity of the American press to doubt that you will think it fair to let your readers know the real facts.

We beg to remain, Sir,

Yours truly,

P. Lefaucheux
Président Directeur Général
Renault
Billancourt, Seine, France

Sir:

I have read with interest your debate, *Should We Turn to Parliamentary Government?* (May, p. 288). As a British professional historian who has specialized in parliamentary and constitutional history for some years, may I venture to pass some comments, chiefly for the sake of historical clarity and accuracy?

First to the somewhat vague remark that "in other countries unfortunate enough to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

have copied the British form," (i.e. of parliamentary government), democracy has "lost out" to dictatorship. To a dictatorship imposed from within, as in Germany and Italy? Or imposed by a foreign country, as by Germany, Italy, and Russia? Or both? It is a somewhat rash statement in any case. No domestic dictatorship in modern years resulted from the parliamentary governments of Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, France, the Dominions, and many other countries which had to some extent copied the British system. In Germany where democracy did "lose out" to a domestic dictatorship, in many ways the federal system of Weimar resembled more the structure of United States government than British. Germany "lost out" (in the parliamentary sphere) because her politicians lost touch with the electorate as they are in danger of doing today. This was partly due to an electoral system which bred a multiplicity of parties, to a party insistence on narrow doctrinaire policies at the expense of broad national platforms, to a rigid party discipline, to a loss of faith on the part of political leaders in democratic methods, and to their lack of political experience. If Mr. Thompson means or also includes the second interpretation, surely the defeat of parliamentary government was really due to "power politics" and armed force. Does he imagine that a presidential system of government would have been more effective in saving Norway, Denmark, Holland, and Belgium? In the establishment of dictatorships the many extra-parliamentary factors which come into play can wreck any democratic system regardless of its variations. Twenty miles of sea saved the British.

To pass to Mr. Thompson's remarks on British parliamentary politics. First, Mr. Thompson appears at times to identify the British Parliament with the House of Commons. Now despite the desires and menaces of some of our more advanced politicians, the British Parliament still remains composed of the Sovereign, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal (Upper House), and the Commons (the elected Lower House, and admittedly most important element).

In effect the Crown has little actual political power, though its influence varies according to the character of the monarch and the statesmen in power. Theoretically the King can still dismiss his ministers, but he would have to find new ones who could justify his action before Parliament and the people. Formerly (before 1688), Mr. Thompson would have us believe that under absolute monarchs (a rather loose phrase), "Parliament had no rights at all." It was "entirely his (the King's) creature." It is quite true that the King had a useful weapon in dissolution, but there were numerous Parliaments before 1688 both called and dissolved in the King's name without his sanction, and there were quite a few Parliaments who "broke" the King. During the long centuries, though their power tended at different periods to vary, the Commons were winning and retaining concessions from the two other elements, the Sovereign and the Lords. And the kings who proved the strongest and the wisest in our history were those who ruled with the cooperation of Parliament's two Houses. Very few monarchs managed to get along without them, for at an early stage they had possessed themselves of the right to tax the nation.

After 1688, Mr. Thompson sees this alleged dictatorial weapon of dissolution transferred to the Cabinet. Ignoring the House of Lords, he proceeds to identify the Cabinet with the Commons. The Cabinet will not desire to lose office; the members of the Commons will wish at all costs to retain their seats; and therefore, by the blackmail of threatening dissolution, the Cabinet can remain in power, appears to be the gist of part of his argument. Such a naïve simplification is more applicable to pre-war France than the United Kingdom. Dissolution there was avoided because most of the deputies had to fight their electoral battles without much financial help from their parties. Thus, rather than dissolution, any coalitions were improvised and tolerated. But His Majesty's Opposition which Mr. Thompson somewhat contemptuously ignores (it might number from a third to nearly half of the 640 members of the Lower House, and at present considerably outnumbers the Government in the Upper House), is made of somewhat different stuff. Now I am quite prepared to admit that the Opposition will not insist on the Parliament being dissolved over a "snap vote" on some

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

minor issue and that they might await a favourable opportunity for precipitating a dissolution, but to assert that they will not try to make the government resign because they wish to sit out their five-year-term of election is an exaggeration. The leader of the Opposition is officially recognised and has a salary of £2,000 a year for the duty of "opposing." (He will, by the way, get four times as much if he succeeds in turning out the Cabinet). The present Opposition under Churchill have been trying to defeat the government ever since this Parliament began.

Secondly, even the Government's own supporters are not as slavish as Mr. Thompson would have us believe the whole of the Lower House is (to say nothing of the Lords), as witness the revolt of the Socialist "backbenchers" over the "Hanging Clause" (to abolish the death penalty) and various other divisions where seats were risked, not only through a possible appeal to the country, but by offending party leaders and organizations.

A little later, Mr. Thompson, who appears resolved at all cost to prove some kind of dictatorship in the United Kingdom, talks about a conspicuous lack of checks and balances leading to a type of dictatorship since Cabinet and Commons work together (the two latter words being somewhat ambiguous). The whole of British parliamentary history (and of parliamentary procedure in addition) is one of checks and balances, both written and unwritten. The duration of a Parliament (contrary to Mr. Thompson's statement that there are no laws on dissolution) is and has been limited by the Triennial Act, 1694, the Septennial Act, 1715, and the Parliament Act, 1911, though it is quite true that Parliament can by law prolong its life from year to year in the event of a grave emergency such as war. The Cabinet and the Commons (even if they did "work together" in spirit), are checked in passing bills (other than money) by the veto of the House of Lords—Parliament Bill of 1911. And this is no empty veto as is shown by the Lords success in deleting the "Hanging Clause" from the Criminal Justice Bill. The power of the Crown has been progressively curtailed by law from 1330, when by statute it was "accorded that Parliament shall be holden every year once." And to assert that the whole system of parliamentary Cabinet government lies outside the realm of law is again a little inaccurate. Statutory limitations are laid down in the Ministers of the Crown Act of 1937. The expenditure of ministerial departments is checked by law. Admittedly, however, the greatest check is not a statutory one, but that of having those responsible for the Executive within the Legislature to which they are *directly,* and *constantly,* and *personally* responsible. When the executive heads are in such a position there is obviously less need for a strict and detailed definition of their powers than where, as in the United States Constitution, the Executive is divorced from the Legislature. In addition, democracy is safeguarded more by conventions than by laws. But in the construction of the constitution, the British have in effect adhered to the principle expressed by one of the greatest Americans, Lincoln, in 1854 that "no man is good enough to govern another man without that other's consent," and in addition they have ensured the right to revoke that consent. Their rulers are granted wide but temporary powers, and they are always subject to criticism and dismissal. And in the hands of the electorate lies the ultimate responsibility for the continuance of a free democracy.

J. D. Lambert
Royal Automobile Club
Pall Mall
London, Sw. 1, England

A radical is a man who wants $10 more a week. A conservative is a man who wants $100,000 more a year. —Harlan Miller, *Des Moines Register*

General Eisenhower's example should be an encouragement to youngsters. Every boy has the opportunity to grow up and not be President if he doesn't want to.
—*St. Louis Post-Dispatch*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

More Than

FIFTY YEARS OF FORUM

Economic security, the responsibility of the government for the welfare of its citizens, the relationship of economics and politics dominated the presidential election of 1948. Yet, in the halcyon days of the twenties, such issues were considered "bunk." Rejoicing in the first election since 1896 to stir men's passions, FORUM hailed the campaign year of 1928 for its clear-cut issues: prohibition, farm relief, the development of water power, foreign policies, and, above all, "the dramatically contrasted personalities and backgrounds of Mr. Hoover and Governor Smith."

Anxious to debunk the "prosperity issue": *It has become a tradition in American politics to believe that political parties are somehow responsible for the nation's prosperity*— FORUM asked the nation's leading businessmen for their opinions.

Roger W. Babson felt that prosperity had spread from 1924-28 and that the Republican administration had played an important part: *The aphorism that the best government is the one which governs least is aptly borne out by the record of the past four years. American business has been able to proceed with the confidence that it would not be needlessly harassed and hampered by the administration at Washington. There has been a minimum of hostile legislation and a maximum of executive and administrative cooperation.*

Mr. Babson concludes with the prophetic, if paradoxical, reflection: *today presidents are created by business conditions more often than business conditions are created by Presidents. We have in the past attached too much importance to the electoral college and not enough to the business cycle.*

Henry Ford found politics and economics divorced: *So far as the economic doctrines of political parties are concerned, the country's prosperity is as safe with one as with the other. If this does not appear when the logical consequences of certain political doctrines are considered, it readily appears when political ideas run up against economic facts. No party any longer opposes successful business. It is now understood that the prosperity of the country is a sign of health and productive vigor.*

Evans Woollen, President of the Fletcher Savings and Trust Company, of Indianapolis, took issue with Messrs. Babson, Ford, and Firestone. Pointing to the severe agricultural depression and the failures of small business, Mr. Woollen pointed out that, although the farmers themselves were to blame in failing to mechanize, the administration was to blame in supporting the tariff. He also scored: *the application of the philosophy of government that prosperity should be promoted for the big on the assumption that the big will benevolently share their prosperity with the little.*

By and large, the prosperity which the country may reasonably expect from Governor Smith or Mr. Hoover does not radically differ. There is a deal of bunkum about political parties and prosperity, particularly in the arrogant assumption that we cannot have prosperity except through the Republican party. Our prosperity is not made by the political parties. They may add thereto or subtract therefrom, but they do not make it. Our general well-being is based on our unequaled natural resources. To them we apply an unequaled mechanical equipment and unequaled labor.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CONGRESS DEBATES:

Investigating Powers

AN age-old conflict of our constitutional separation of powers has revolved around the refusal of presidents and executive departments to give to congressional committees information considered confidential. The Condon case highlighted this problem when President Truman refused to give the House Un-American Activities Committee a letter from the Federal Bureau of Investigation supposedly clearing Dr. Condon on loyalty charges. The House retaliated with Joint Resolution 342. By a vote of 219 to 142, the lower chamber passed a resolution requiring that information of any sort could be obtained from any executive department by request of a committee majority, upon the approval of the House Speaker.

Despite the protests of the Republican majority, this gesture was obviously the culmination of two years' struggle between a Democratic President and an opposition Congress. And, as the debate indicates, there is a real conflict between the provisions of the resolution providing penalties for divulging information which a committee majority may deem confidential and the constitutional immunity which protects members of Congress from being answerable for statements made on the legislative floor. The resolution died in the Senate.

Below are excerpts from the debate on this unique constitutional issue of where the powers of the legislature end and those of the executive begin.[1]

* * *

Mr. BROWN, Republican, Ohio. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 575 makes in order the immediate consideration of House Joint Resolution 342, which in turn provides for directing all executive departments and agencies of the federal government to make available to any and all standing, special, or select committees of the House of Representatives and the Senate, information which may be deemed necessary to enable them to properly perform the duties delegated to them by the Congress. If I might explain the meaning of this joint resolution, and the reasons for it, in a few short sentences, I would say that in recent years we have seen bureaucracy grow to such great proportions in the United States, and so many responsibilities placed upon both the executive branch and legislative branch of the government, that it is absolutely necessary the Congress have the authority and power, such as this, in order to be certain that the will and mandates of the Congress are properly carried out; that the appropriations made by Congress are expended as intended, and that the activities of the executive branch of the government, and I refer especially to its bureaus and agencies, be checked regularly, and that they do supply to the Congress the information the Congress must have in order to legislate intelligently. . . . .

I do not question the right of the President to do as he has done in the Condon case under the present law. There is a real question whether he has acted wisely, however. Whether such incidents will arise in the future can easily be settled by the Congress adopting this joint resolution. However, the President of the United States has seen fit

1 The *Congressional Record, House,* Vol. 94, No. 85, pp. 5844-5888.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to take the papers in this particular Condon case from the Department of Commerce into his own keeping. Of course, this resolution, as I understand it, would not apply to the President himself, or any papers that he might have in his possession. However, I do feel that this is such a serious problem that it should be considered thoroughly by this House and by the Congress.

In conclusion, I would like to point out that under House Joint Resolution 342 no committee could demand or subpena any papers in question unless first the majority of the committee voted therefor; and either the Speaker of the House, in case of a House committee, or the President of the Senate, in case of a Senate committee, approved the issuance of a subpena for the papers in question. I think that provision gives adequate protection. However, there is greater protection provided for in this bill, and that is that the information so obtained shall be kept, under majority vote of the committee, secret and in confidence, and a penalty is provided for revealing any of the information which might be obtained in confidence from any branch of the government, especially if that information is decided by a majority of the committee to be of such import that making it public would be of injury to the public welfare. . . . .

I would like to point out that the Committee on Expenditures had this matter before it long previous to the Dr. Condon case even became an issue, and I believe they reported it out before the Condon case became an issue. This is not based on the Condon case alone.

Mr. SABATH, Democrat, Illinois. I know, but that committee did not see fit to bring in, recommend, or urge any legislation, until the Committee on Un-American Activities made it an issue. The legislative committees and the Appropriations Committee of this House never did have trouble obtaining any information they sought. I never heard of any complaint from any legislative committee or even the Appropriations Committee, to whom we have given extraordinary power to investigate any complaint, that they have been unable to obtain information that would be of interest and benefit and that was needed for legislative purposes.

This matter comes to us because about a year and a half after this letter was sent about Dr. Condon and after the Commerce Department, under the direction of Secretary Harriman, caused an investigation to be made by its special loyalty committee, they came to the conclusion that there was no justification for any such insinuation as to the loyalty of Dr. Condon. . . . .

Mr. McCORMACK, Democrat, Massachusetts. I want to call particular attention to what this bill does. When a confidential paper is required by a committee of the House, it gives the Speaker of the House a veto power over the committee. The paper cannot be asked for unless the Speaker approves it. First of all, it gives him a veto power. Secondly, it substitutes him for the President of the United States, and this applies likewise to the Presiding Officer of the Senate. This places the Presiding Officer of the Senate in the place of the President of the United States. You have got to realize what is taking place in the passage of this bill. Not only does it give the power of veto to the Presiding Officer of either House but it means that veto substitutes the Presiding Officer of the House or the Senate for the President of the United States in determining this far-reaching question. . . . .

CONDON CASE

Mr. SABATH. Notwithstanding the statement of the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. BROWN] I feel that the consideration of this resolution is due to the Condon matter because after a year and a half the Committee on Un-American Activities obtained information that an anonymous letter was sent to the Atomic Energy Commission, that the Department of Commerce had made an investigation, and also that the F.B.I. made an investigation. Notwithstanding all those investigations resulting from an anonymous letter, none of the alleged charges, as I understand it, were proven, and the reports of all investigative agencies indicated that there was no justification for questioning the loyalty or patriotism of Dr. Condon. But the Committee on Un-American Activities sought some additional publicity, so they requested that they be furnished the report of the F.B.I. That request has been refused because under the Constitu-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion the President has the right to withhold any information that he concludes is not in the public interest or may endanger the safety of the country.

Mr. HUBER, Democrat, Ohio. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SABATH. I yield to the gentleman from Ohio.

Mr. HUBER. Does the gentleman not feel that it might be possible that the sponsors of this legislation may be outsmarting themselves in that some time in the future, with a Republican administration and a Democratic Congress, certain members of the Congress might embarrass the administration in power, and that this legislation may boomerang on them?

Mr. SABATH. I do not agree with the gentleman because the Democratic Party has never taken any such action and I am sure will not do so in the future. This is purely a political gesture for politics; purely for politics and for nothing else. . . . .

Mr. RIZLEY, Republican, Oklahoma. The gentleman wants to be absolutely fair, and I know that he did not intend to say that this was a political bill, because such distinguished gentlemen on the committee as Mr. Lanham, Mr. Hardy, and Mr. Wilson, of Texas, on the minority side, signed the majority report on this bill. Certainly the gentleman does not want to accuse members over there of playing politics, I am sure. . . . .

Mr. SABATH. I still must insist that this is a political resolution, because former Secretary Harriman and the newly appointed Secretary of Commerce, Mr. Sawyer, who only a few days ago examined the report, came to the same conclusion as former Secretary Harriman, that there is nothing in the F.B.I. report that would in any way reflect upon the honesty or loyalty of Dr. Condon. But, Dr. Condon himself urged that this report be made public; consequently I know and I am satisfied that there cannot be anything against this man who has served the country in important capacities for so many years. Nothwithstanding his request, the President still feels that it is his sworn duty under the Constitution to refuse to comply with the request, believing that the information sought may not be for the best interests of the country, and the chances are he very likely feels that the request has been made merely to make more capital and give more publicity to the Condon case and strengthen, perhaps, the position of the Committee on Un-American Activities. . . . .

Mr. HOFFMAN, Republican, Michigan. Mr. Chairman, House Joint Resolution 342 is an effort, by overall legislation, to make available to every committee of the Senate and the House, under certain circumstances, information in the possession of the executive departments which is necessary to enable the Congress to carry out the duties imposed upon it by the Constitution.

The resolution does not grow out of the Condon or any other single incident.

It is an effort to avoid what will otherwise in the future be piecemeal legislation made necessary whenever a conflict arises between the Congress and the executive departments as to the availability of specific information.

It is an attempt to enact legislation which, when interpreted by the courts, will give both the Congress and the executive departments a final answer and a guide for the settlement of numerous inevitable disputes which otherwise will arise. . . . .

The resolution in no way seeks information from any individual holding an office created by the Constitution.

APPROPRIATIONS

Neither by its terms nor by implication does the resolution seek information from the President or from any member of the judiciary. It asks that the committees of the Congress be given information which is in the possession of the government departments, agencies, and boards created by congressional action or which exist only by virtue of congressional appropriations. . . . .

Strange, indeed, would it be if those in the departments created by congressional acts, existing only because of continued congressional appropriations, had the right to deny to the agency which created them, which, from year to year, breathes life into them through continued federal appropriations, information necessary to enable Congress to determine the necessity for their continued existence, to learn whether they were properly exercising the functions imposed upon them, whether they

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

were honestly spending the money which Congress gives to them.

Is the creature greater than its creator? Can a department whose very existence depends upon the action of the Congress refuse to tell the Congress what it is doing, how and for what purpose it is spending public funds? Neither the Department of State, the Department of Justice, nor the Department of Commerce are created by the Constitution. Each and all of the departments and agencies exist because of the action of the Congress. The Congress, if it so desires, can abolish those departments. Does it not follow then that it has the authority to make and procure information in the possession of those departments? Just when and where did the executive departments get the idea that they were above and beyond the reach of the Congress? . . . .

Mr. KEEFE, Republican, Wisconsin. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HOFFMAN. I yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. KEEFE. Assuming that this resolution is adopted and passed by both Houses of Congress and the President is required to sign it.

Mr. HOFFMAN. Yes.

Mr. KEEFE. Assuming he vetoes it and it is ultimately passed over his veto so as to become law and it goes into operation. Then the House Committee on Un-American Activities directs an executive department to turn over a letter or a file and the President immediately directs that executive agency not to do it. What then happens, if anything?

Mr. HOFFMAN. Nothing, except as the decision of the President may be changed by public opinion. I do not believe that the Congress has any authority over the President of the United States. . . . .

Mr. GRAHAM, Republican, Pennsylvania. Our next step is to impeach the President of the United States.

Mr. KEEFE. Outside of the question of impeachment, there is nothing that can be done?

Mr. HOFFMAN. Not that I know of. Inasmuch as the office of President is created by the Constitution I know of no way by which the Congress can reach him except, as the gentleman from Pennsylvania says, by impeachment.

Mr. KEEFE. As I understand it, Congress passed a resolution directing the Secretary of Commerce to turn over to the House for inspection the so-called Condon letter. The President directed the Secretary of Commerce not to turn that over, and he refused to turn the letter over to the committee in the face of a specific direction from the House arising from the passage of that resolution. Now we are asked to pass this resolution, and a similar situation occurs. Nothing happens, except as the gentleman from Pennsylvania indicated—the Congress, in its wisdom, based upon that simple fact, desires to initiate impeachment proceedings, thereby try to impeach the President. Now I am asking the gentleman if that is not exactly the situation that confronts us in connection with what is a very well-intentioned effort to protect what is conceived to be the proper sphere of influence and activity of the Congress and what would come about as a result of passing this resolution?

Mr. HOFFMAN. I do not think so. Assuming this resolution becomes the law of the land and it is upheld by the Supreme Court, if a congressional committee makes proper demand upon the executive department to turn over something, and it refuses, under this resolution as I expect it will be amended, the executive or the individual in the executive department so refusing would be subject to a penalty. I cannot conceive of any man being in the presidential office who will follow a course similar to that taken by the present Executive when he called for the return of that letter. I do not believe public opinion will permit a repetition of that practice. I do not believe that any man in the White House, after he realizes what a move of that sort means, and after passage of a resolution like this and its interpretation by the Court, will have the hardihood, if I may use that word in preference to another more harsh term, to follow that course. I cannot believe that possible. . . . .

Mr. JAVITS, Republican, New York. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HOFFMAN. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mr. JAVITS. The gentleman objects to the amendment to section 2 of this resolution which would provide that where the secretary of an executive department marked information confidential the committee would keep it confidential?

Mr. HOFFMAN. Where he marked it?

Mr. JAVITS. In other words, there would be two ways of making information confidential under this resolution, first, if the committee so resolved, or, second, if the secretary transmitting the information asked that it be kept confidential. That part is not in this resolution.

RIGHT OF CONGRESS

Mr. HOFFMAN. I do not see why any secretary or anyone in the executive departments should have the final word on what information should be made available to the Congress. . . . .

It is assumed that if the Congress compels executive departments to disclose to it information which the head of that department deems to be confidential and the disclosure of which would endanger the Republic, the Congress will peddle it to the world. That assumption is an insult not only to the Members of Congress but to the people whose representatives they are. It is without foundation in fact.

It ignores the fact that the very first words of the Constitution are these:

"All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States."

That in the exercise of those powers the Congress must create and supervise departments and agencies and that every activity of those agencies must be made available to the Congress.

The Congress, and only the Congress, is given the power to provide for the common defense and the general welfare of the United States. It is given the authority "to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution" the powers conferred upon it by the Constitution "and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States or in any department or officer thereof."

The Constitution has spoken; the executive department is ill-advised to ignore its terms. The Congress has the power to adopt this legislation and it should now assert itself and recapture from the bureaucrats the power which they, without authority, are exercising. . . . .

To protect, insofar as possible, the security of the Republic, while at the same time guaranteeing to the citizenry a free press and free speech, this resolution was drawn.

Note its terms. It expressly provides that a request to the executive departments for information must be made by a majority of the committee.

As a further safeguard, the resolution provides that that request must receive the approval of the Speaker or the Acting Speaker of the House, or, if the request comes from a committee of the other body, the approval of the Acting President of that body.

Certainly, the combined ability, loyalty, and discretion of a majority of a congressional committee and of the Presiding Officer of the Senate or the House is at least equal to like qualities possessed by department heads.

Nor is that the end of the safeguards contained in the resolution. It further provides that, when information has been received by a committee, the committee shall forthwith meet, and by a majority vote of the committee, determine whether the information received should be kept secret, whether a part and, if a part, what part, shall be made public and what part shall remain secret. . . . .

Mr. McCORMACK. Mr. Chairman, if we want to bring this matter to a head it is not necessary to pass a law or to pass this bill. Let us assume that a committee of Congress vested with the power and authority to summon witnesses, called on the head of an agency, say the Secretary of Commerce, and the Secretary of Commerce appears, which he would do, and in that appearance said he cannot answer questions because it concerns confidential matters, or that the President has taken that position and has given him such instructions, which you and I would have to do if we were in his position, there is nothing in the world to stop that committee from then reporting a resolution to the House to bring him before the bar of the House. We can try men in this body. It has not been done for some years, but it was. I am not saying we should in view of the intricate problems of the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

day, but we have that power. We have original jurisdiction.

We could then make a test case, purely impersonal; bring the man before the bar of the House, then he could bring a writ of habeas corpus, which would immediately throw the matter in the courts. I submit this whole question would then be squarely presented to the courts. That would be the quick way to do it. Yet 79 Congresses in their wisdom never went that far, 79 Congresses even in the heat of the days succeeding the War Between the States or even before the War Between the States in the heat of arguments that arose in those periods never went that far.

This is nothing new. It first started with George Washington. The question arose on the right of the executive branch of the government, the President, to determine on confidential matters or confidential papers.

Mr. HOFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield further?

Mr. McCORMACK. I yield.

Mr. HOFFMAN. Of course, the issue between Washington and Congress at that time had to do with foreign policy which, under the Constitution, clearly came within his exclusive jurisdiction.

HISTORY

Mr. McCORMACK. In George Washington's time it was instructions to United States Minister concerning the Jay Treaty.

In Thomas Jefferson's time it was confidential information and letters relating to Burr's conspiracy.

In James Monroe's time it was documents relating to conduct of naval officers.

In Andrew Jackson's time it was copy of paper read by President to heads of departments relating to removal of bank deposits. Copies of charges against removed public officials. List of all appointments made without Senate's consent, since 1829, and those receiving salaries, without holding office.

In John Tyler's time it was names of members of Twenty-sixth and Twenty-seventh Congresses who applied for office. Report to War Department dealing with alleged frauds practiced on Indians, and Colonel Hitchcock's views of personal characters of Indian delegates.

In James K. Polk's time it was evidence of payments made through State Department, on President's certificates, by prior administration.

In Millard Fillmore's time it was official information concerning proposition made by King of Sandwich Islands to transfer islands to United States.

In James Buchanan's time it was message of protest to House against resolution to investigate attempts by Executive to influence legislation.

In Abraham Lincoln's time it was dispatches of Major Anderson to the War Department concerning defense of Fort Sumter.

In Ulysses S. Grant's time it was information concerning Executive acts performed away from Capitol.

In Rutherford B. Hayes' time it was Secretary of Treasury refusal to answer questions and to produce papers concerning reasons for nomination of Theodore Roosevelt as collector of Port of New York.

In Grover Cleveland's time it was documents relating to suspension and removal of federal officials.

In Theodore Roosevelt's time it was Attorney General's reasons for failure to prosecute United States Steel Corporation, Documents of Bureau of Corporations, Department of Commerce.

In Calvin Coolidge's time it was list of companies in which Secretary of Treasury Mellon was interested.

In Herbert Hoover's time it was telegrams and letters leading up to London Naval Treaty. Testimony and documents concerning investigation made by Treasury Department.

In Franklin D. Roosevelt's time it was Federal Bureau of Investigation reports.

Director, Bureau of the Budget, refused to testify and to produce files. Chairman Federal Communications Commission and Board of War Communications refused records.

In Franklin D. Roosevelt's time it was General Counsel, Federal Communications Commission, refused to produce records. Secretaries of War and Navy refused to furnish documents, and permission for Army and naval officers to testify. J. Edgar Hoover refused to give testimony and to produce President's directive.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In President Truman's time it was issued directions to heads of executive departments to permit officers and employees to give information to Pearl Harbor Committee. President's directive did not include any files or written material. Civil Service Commission records concerning applicants for positions.

There have been others. There is a history going right back to the days of Washington, of President after President, with due respect to the Congress, but feeling that it was their constitutional duty not to disclose it. Whether they were right or wrong, I am not going to argue that. I am arguing with respect to their rights. If they were wrong, they were responsible to the people, just the same as we are. There has got to be independence in this body. There has got to be independence in the executive branch. There has got to be independence in the judiciary. We have to respect one another. These questions arose on isolated occasions, but unfortunately they did arise.....

Mr. COLE, Republican, Kansas. According to the illustration given by the gentleman in the case that he has cited, as I understand the matter, the bill as amended will not apply to the State Department, would it?

Mr. McCORMACK. Yes.

Mr. COLE. In other words, in line 4 of the present bill, where it says "departments created by Congress," that would apply to the State Department?

Mr. McCORMACK. Yes. It is created by Congress.

Mr. COLE. That would include the State Department?

Mr. McCORMACK. Yes. The gentleman will find that all the departments and agencies are created by Congress. The executive branch is a constitutional branch. But then the Congress passes laws creating the different departments and agencies.

Mr. COLE. The gentleman thinks that this covers the State Department?

Mr. McCORMACK. Yes; it covers all agencies and all departments, as I understand it, in the executive branch of the government. . . . .

Mr. EBERHARTER, Democrat, Pennsylvania. Under the provisions of this bill, could a committee call on the State Department for a confidential letter which they had obtained from some foreign government?

Mr. McCORMACK. Absolutely.

Mr. EBERHARTER. Or the matter might be with respect to some treaty negotiation or with respect to any matter in process of settlement between the two countries?

Mr. McCORMACK. Absolutely. The only place where this would not operate would be with reference to the President and to the office of the President of the United States. Then what we would do is pass a resolution if it is consistent with the public interest or words to that effect. Furthermore, you must remember that the information we want is on legislative matters. The Executive engages in many activities in enforcing the law and in dealing with other countries which are not legislative in nature. You must remember that a great many confidential papers have no relationship to legislation. Of course, by a far stretch of interpretation, you could bring everything in. I will admit that. But I am trying to apply a rule of reason to the operation of our government. This bill, if it became law, would include everything.

Mr. MACKINNON, Republican, Minnesota. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. McCORMACK. I yield.

Mr. MACKINNON. All of the papers that the gentleman has mentioned relate to the manner in which laws passed by the Congress are being administered.

Mr. EBERHARTER. If the gentleman will yield to me in that connection, the State Department does a great many things pursuant to the Constitution with reference to which no legislation has been passed, such as the making of treaties, and the gentleman's argument therefore does not apply. . . . .

Mr. McCORMACK. This is the first time in the constitutional history of our country that this matter has been presented to the Congress in the form of a bill. It raises this very deep fundamental question that goes to the very roots of our government in its organizational set-up and in its operational operation, and to the very roots of the integrity of the three coordinate branches of government. These things unfortunately arise every now and then, but to try and meet it by a head-on

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

invasion of other branches necessary to its existence is not the approach. It should be by individual cases. As a matter of fact, if this Congress wanted to approach it and have it acted upon speedily, the way to do it would be to summon the one who refused to testify on the ground that the papers were confidential or that the President had ordered him not to do so—a friendly proceeding could be made of it—and when he was brought before the bar of the House he could then exercise his legal right, and I assume it would be in the nature of a writ of habeas corpus and this whole grave question decided in an orderly way by the courts of the country.

I hope that my friends without regard to party, recognizing the solemnity of their oath on this great constitutional question, will pass upon it in accordance with the views they entertain in their conscience, not on the basis of policy, but treat it as a question of the gravest constitutional nature. . . . .

CONSTITUTIONAL OBJECTIONS

The constitutional objections to House Joint Resolution 342 may be briefly summarized as follows:

The resolution will result in the coercion of the executive departments. Its purpose is to compel the heads of those departments, against the wishes of the President, to furnish information, papers, and documents to congressional committees after the President has determined that it would be against the national public interest to do so. In effect, the resolution proposes to make of the executive departments an adjunct of the legislative branch. Henceforth, says the resolution, heads of the executive departments are to be the servants of the majority of a congressional committee, which shall have the power to supervise the executive branch of the government. In short, to the extent that congressional committees are to direct the executive departments, in violation of and against the orders of the President, and the heads of those departments, those committees will be clothed with a supreme unrestrained executive power. It will be helpful to review what the Constitution states concerning the executive power.

The Constitution provides:

"The executive power shall be vested in a President of the United States" (art. 2, sec. 1, clause 1).

Before entering on the execution of his office the President must take an oath:

"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States" (art. 2, sec. 1, clause 7).

And the President is also required to "take care that the laws be faithfully executed"—article 2, section 3.

While the Constitution does not mention the words "Cabinet officer" or "Cabinet member," it does provide that the President may require the opinion in writing of the principal officers of each of the executive departments, and the President is also given power, with the Senate's consent, to appoint the heads of departments—article 2, section 2, clause 2.

From 1789 until 1913 there were established 10 executive departments, all of which partake of one uniform system and function, to enable the President to perform his duties under the Constitution as the Chief Executive officer of the Nation. The present attempt by Congress to interfere with the President's executive function is not new. Attorney General Mitchell, in an opinion to President Hoover dated January 24, 1933, wrote:

"Attempting to have committees of Congress approve executive acts, or execute administrative functions, or participate in the execution of laws is not a new idea. Carried to its logical conclusion it would enable Congress, through committees or persons selected by it, gradually to take over all executive functions or at least exercise a veto power upon executive action, not by legislation withdrawing authority, but by the action of committees, or of either House acting separately from the other" (37 Op. A. G. 62). . . . .

Mr. GRAHAM. Let us take a commonsense view of this situation for a moment. It is this: If you will now go back and remember your Constitution, you will remember that right after the quotation of the preamble there follows this language:

"All legislative power herein granted shall be vested in the Congress of the United States,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which shall consist of a Senate and a House of Representatives."

We come first. We are the first named in the Constitution. What is next? The executive power shall be vested in a President of the United States. Next, the judicial power of the United States shall be vested in the Supreme Court and such inferior courts as the Congress shall from time to time ordain and establish. First there is your legislative branch, second your executive branch, and, third, your judicial branch, and the only branch of the judicial that has any standing under the Constitution is the Supreme Court and no inferior court unless created by the Congress.....

What do we face today? There are 1,141 bureaus and departments set up in our government, with an expanding bureaucracy of over 2,000,000 people. A new situation has now arisen that no one could ever have foreseen in the early days of our government. As the gentleman from Massachusetts has correctly stated, this was never done before, but if ever the hour of decision has arrived it is now. We are going to deal with it now and we have to deal with it head on. We cannot avoid it any longer. No matter what the failure of the past has been, no matter wherein we have failed to meet this condition, we can no longer brush it aside. It is a matter of determination for us. . . . .

If you approach it from this angle or that angle or any other angle, I repeat to you what I said in the beginning, that this is a matter that can no longer be avoided. We must meet it. This great sprawling bureaucracy with these tremendous grants of powers and the subordination which past executives have sought to bring about in lowering the dignity, honor, and position of the Congress, can no longer be tolerated. We have come to the moment of decision. Therefore, let us meet it like men. Let us pass this resolution without respect to whatever individual may be the incumbent at the White House. Let us say to him: "Thus far shall thou go, and no farther." Then when the Supreme Court passes on it, we can again as we did the other day on the tidelands matter, declare what the policy of government shall be. Having done that, my friends and brethren, we will have done a man-sized job. . . . .

Mr. BROOKS, Democrat, Louisiana. I have been reading the report, and I notice the gentleman's name is affixed to the report. I would like to know this, briefly: Does the gentleman concur with the reasoning in the majority report, to which his name is signed?

Mr. HARDY, Democrat, Virginia. Not entirely. I do not recall having seen the report until after it was printed. I do not recall that it was presented to me for signature. I voted favorably on reporting the measure to the House for consideration, specifically reserving the right to oppose the measure on the floor.

There have been instances when additional information from the executive departments would have been most helpful to our committee in its work. There have been instances in which the executive departments have declined to honor request from our chairman. It is presumed that the executive departments had reasons for withholding the information which, in their judgment, seemed valid. I shall not discuss the merits or demerits of these reasons, but I think it unfortunate that there has not always existed a close spirit of cooperation between the executive departments and the committees of Congress.

I shall vote against the resolution. My reasoning is entirely different from the reasoning that has been presented heretofore. My position is not based on grounds of conflict with the Constitution, and I recognize the sincerity of the various arguments that have been presented on this point and which will be presented, I am sure, later on in the debate. Frankly, on that score I am somewhat confused. I shall oppose it because I am afraid of it. I am afraid of leaks in information that may be disastrous, that may be serious to our government. Personally, I do not want access to highly secret information that may be embarrassing or may be harmful to our government, if it got out. I have witnessed leaks. I do not know how they came about. But supposedly confidential information did get out of our own committee and appear in the columns of the press. More important information could get out equally as easily. Of course, I know that penalties are provided, but the imposition of penalties on those responsible for divulging information would not undo the damage that might already

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

have been done. That reasoning is entirely different from reasoning along constitutional lines. I leave arguments of constitutionality for my more erudite lawyer friends, but I am voting against this resolution purely from the standpoint of a commonsense approach to a realistic situation. I do not believe that confidential information secured in this manner can be kept confidential. . . . .

Mr. WADSWORTH, Republican, New York. The President, of course, cannot be approached under this bill. May I say, in making an observation on another point that was raised a little while ago, nor can the Congress demand of the President the records of confidential negotiations with foreign governments. That is outside of the field of the jurisdiction of Congress, for under the Constitution of the United States the President represents the country in the conduct of foreign relations. For example, neither confidential communications between the President or his agent, the Secretary of State, with the American Ambassador in Moscow nor communications with foreign governments would be subject to the provisions of this bill. You need not be alarmed about that. What we are concerned about is the operation of the executive branch of our government on our domestic scene. This bill represents an attempt—some may call it awkward—at least, it represents an attempt to secure better information for the Congress as it attempts to do its duty representing the people.

COVERAGE

Mr. McCORMACK. Mr. Chairman, I call attention to the fact that my friend from New York [Mr. WADSWORTH], I am sure, unintentionally made a statement to the House that is not warranted by a review of the provisions in this bill. I agree with him that any confidential papers of the President would not be affected, whether it be with an Ambassador or not, but when the gentleman says that confidential papers between the Secretary of State and an Ambassador or anybody else in a foreign country is not covered, then I am in complete disagreement with my friend, because it is covered by this bill. The Atomic Energy Commission is covered. If this had been the law just before the invasion of Europe and the majority of a committee wanted information, they could pass a resolution to get information from General Eisenhower or General Marshall. Nothing in the world could stop them under the provisions of this bill. Now, if it affects the office of the President, then what about all of the other agencies which the President is the head of? They are all subject to the provisions of this bill. Every department of government is. The State Department is created by law. The Secretary of State is created by law. Every agency and every department and Cabinet officer is a creature created by law to enable the President to carry out the duties of the executive branch. So, when you get away from the President, this applies to every agency of government, whether we are at war or whether we are at peace, and it does not confine itself to domestic affairs. I want to stress the point as emphatically as I can because my friend from New York, I am sure, unintentionally conveyed to the House, the impression that so far as the papers of the State Department in relation to foreign countries are concerned, they would not be subject to the provisions of this law.

Mr. WADSWORTH. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. McCORMACK. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WADSWORTH. Let me say that the gentleman from New York to whom the gentleman referred did not make that statement unintentionally. I meant it.

Mr. McCORMACK. Does the gentleman from Michigan say that this bill does not cover the situation of a majority of the committee voting to get confidential papers of the State Department, the Speaker concurring and approving?

Mr. HOFFMAN. Of course it does not, because the Constitution itself puts all foreign relations under the executive department.

Mr. McCORMACK. This is amazing. You specifically exclude the State Department, do you?

Mr. HOFFMAN. Certainly we do, but there are certain fields the State Department covers besides foreign relations, and when it comes to those fields it should come under this bill.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mr. McCORMACK. You would have to put in the bill an amendment like the freedom-of-the-press provision, if you want to protect that, because this bill covers that. . . . .

Mr. SASSCER, Democrat, Maryland. This bill does not state that the Congress can subpena various types of papers from the departments. As I read it, it vests that authority in any committee of the House. Reference was made a moment ago to the preservation of the dignity of the Congress. I subscribe to that, and subscribe to it in an age where there has been a reaching out by bureaus, but if those bureaus transgress the authority vested in them or if those bureaus are holding back an individual piece of information or a document, there is nothing to stop Congress in its wisdom from obtaining a given document as was done here some weeks ago by majority action. The power of legislation would still be preserved and the dignity of the Congress would remain intact, which it seems to be feared today we will let drift away if we do not pass this legislation. Instead we have a dragnet bill which would permit any committee to get any secret paper. We say that the information may not get out. I have been in public life for a long time. I have been in conferences with numerous true and tried people, both within and without the Congress of the United States. But, my colleagues, if you are in a conference with over two or three people, no matter how sincere they may be, if the subject matter of the conference has to do with some matter or information which is secret and other information that is not secret, then after days go by, your recollection becomes dim as to what is secret and what is not secret. If the committee is entitled to this information, a colleague may ask you on the floor of the House what the information was, and you begin to rack your mind as to what was secret and what was not. Then it is only a short time before the information begins to seep out over your radio and through your news commentators.

In an age when it is necessary for these departments of our government, the F.B.I., the Treasury Department, our Army and our Navy, to gather secret information, barriers should not be set up to stop the free flow of information to departments that might make vital use of it. By the passage of this legislation, we say to the citizens of our country, "If you give any information to an F.B.I. agent or to an agent, perchance, investigating subversive activities or income-tax frauds, you may be revealed as the source of that information." If you say to citizens that information they give in secret to an investigator is not held inviolate, you have immediately made it extremely difficult to combat violations of law—to combat communism, if you will, because certainly American citizens are not freely going to give information which possibly for security reasons of their own or for fear of retaliation they might otherwise freely give to an agent for the use or for the good of the government. The government will not get such information if the persons who might give it know that a committee of the Congress may summon for any of these papers and the names of the various people who gave the information become known. It is going to make it extremely difficult to obtain not only secret information, but necessary information for carrying on the orderly processes of our government.

A situation could have prevailed had this been law at the time—where the War Department could have been summoned and secret and confidential plans as to the time and place of the European invasion might have been obtained, with disastrous effect to invading forces. . . . .

Mr. MacKINNON. I am not 100 per cent for this bill as it is presently written. I want to say frankly that I am of the opinion that the subpena power which we presently possess gives us everything we would have under this particular bill. The difficulty comes in our following up after we have met a refusal. Under the subpena power as it exists today we come to the particular point where we run into a refusal as to what to do to compel obedience. Then it is up to us to make a decision. Mr. Chairman, we are going to be exactly in the same position with respect to this resolution; and we are going to be compelled if this bill passes, the same as we are today, to decide whether we are going to proceed with a contempt action. We cannot get around that. I recognize the fact that this will help because there are a lot of people down in these departments with peculiar mentalities—and I have

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

run into a number of them in the short time I have been here—who do not respect anything if it is not written in the form of a law. . . . .

Mr. Chairman, I made the statement that I had run into a number of such individuals since becoming a Member of Congress. I know a great many citizens back home, if they were in my position and had run into as many devious claims of secrecy by federal departments as I have in the small amount of work a first-term member usually engages in, would realize the importance and necessity of doing something to make public business public. I find these governmental departments around here hiding behind everything they can possibly hide behind so as not to give information upon public matters of public interest. They hide behind executive orders, regulations, Attorneys General opinions, attorneys' opinions, even though the opinion is rendered by an attorney under the control and direction of the person requesting the opinion and after the member had first taken a position. They often hide behind the word "confidential." . . . .

I recognize that there are a few instances where it may be a good thing to keep a small amount of information in restricted categories, but I do not think valid reasons exist in 95 per cent of the cases, and I do not believe they exist in 99 per cent of the cases where requests are made and refused by the executive department. Obviously, the Army, Navy, and the Atomic Energy Commission have matters of vital importance that must necessarily be kept secret because of the effect it would have upon our security.

Mr. HOFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MACKINNON. I yield to the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. HOFFMAN. Can we not safely presume that a majority of the members of the committees of this House are just as patriotic, just as able to protect secrets, as anyone in these agencies—some bureaucrat, for example?

Mr. MACKINNON. I will answer that at length in the remaining time I have. I think generally that is true; however, there are instances, such as atomic-energy secrets and military secrets, I am sure the gentleman did not include in his remarks. We do not wish to be exposed to that information, and we would not be under this resolution. . . . .

Mr. BOGGS, Democrat, Louisiana. Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, I have listened to this debate since it started this afternoon, and I believe that with only one or two exceptions there has not been a member of this Committee who has stood in this well and attempted to defend this legislation as it is written. I believe that there are many very good reasons for that reluctance among the members of our body.

POLITICS

In the first place it appears to me that this legislation is obviously and palpably political. It is directed against the President of the United States. It is an indication that we, as Members of the Congress, do not have confidence in the integrity, and in the loyalty, and in the good faith of the President of the United States. There are many policies that the President of the United States has publicly advocated which I have not supported, and there may be from time to time many others that I will not support, but the fact remains that the President of the United States, whether he be Republican or Democrat, answers to the people of the United States and his conduct under the Constitution of the United States is reportable to the people of the United States.

We are saying here that we put our judgment over and above that of the Chief Executive of our country in the question of security and in the question of loyalty. It strikes me that regardless of whether we have a Democratic President or a Republican President, that this is one of the most obvious and one of the most notorious invasions of the constitutional separation of powers that has occurred, certainly since I have been participating in and reading the debates of this great body. Aside from that obvious political consideration it seems to me that there are other implications of possibly an even more commanding consideration in this bill. The proponents of this legislation come before us advocating this legislation and asking us to vote for it because, they assert, the security of the nation and the public interest of the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

country demand it. In my opinion quite the contrary is the truth. . . . .

I have heard it said by some of the rather luke-warm proponents of this legislation, and they all appear to be luke-warm, that there are certain fields of federal activity in the executive branch of the government which will be eliminated from this legislation. What assurance do we have that such will be the case? It has been stated that the State Department, because of the fact that it operates in some categories under the treaty-making powers and in other categories under other constitutional powers, will not be subject to the requirements of this legislation if enacted into law. I see no such assurances in this legislation. As someone on the majority side pointed out, each department whether it operates exclusively on the constitutional plane or on the legislative plane, has to come to Congress for appropriations, so the distinction at best is a rather specious one. . . . .

If someone in the executive branch of the government reveals information vital to the security of this nation he is subject to the laws of this nation, he is subject to losing his job, he is subject to the regulations of the executive department, and because he is subject to those rules, is subject to those regulations, and is subject to the penalties which may accrue if he violates that security, he may very well lose his job and he might end up with criminal penalties assessed against him. By that expression I do not mean to indicate a lack of confidence in my brethren in the House. But I do recognize the apparent desire of some Members to do something sensational to get publicity. I have not seen any finer opportunity presented since I have been in the Congress to bring about that sort of thing, which is quite contrary to what we are attempting to achieve in this proposed legislation. I trust the Congress will think twice, and that it will not pass this bill in a spirit of hysteria and with the idea that we are going to stop the spread of communism by passing this bill. This legislation questions the fundamental loyalty of the President of the United States, and in doing that it is wrong. It invades the constitutional prerogatives of the Executive, and again this is wrong. It does not help security. Actually, it creates a serious threat to security. I trust the members of this body will think long, hard, and calmly and in a judicious spirit vote down this nefarious proposal. . . . .

Mr. HOLIFIELD, Democrat, California. The statement made against Dr. Condon is simply this, and I quote:

"One of the weakest links in our atomic security is Dr. Edward U. Condon."

That is expressing the situation very mildly. We have those same words practically repeated today by the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. McDOWELL]. It seems that the gentlemen from that side of the aisle are beginning to weaken a little bit on the Dr. Condon case. After putting out a very, in my opinion, misleading report in which certain portions of the F.B.I. letter were quoted and certain portions, incidentally, left out, the portions quoted were the ones purporting to be derogatory to Dr. Condon and the parts which state no evidence was found to indicate Dr. Condon was a communist or was disloyal was very handily left out of the subcommittee's report. The Dr. Condon case is one of those famous cases which will go down in history. Here is a man, whether he is disloyal to the United States or not, I do not know—I do not think he is personally—I do not think he is disloyal—but whether he is or not, that is beside the point, because this man has been pilloried by the Committee on Un-American Activities for about 11 months. Aspersions have been cast upon his loyalty. What do you mean when you say that he is the weakest link in our atomic-security chain? If you do not mean that the man is disloyal to the United States, what do you mean? That certainly is not a compliment.

He has been pilloried, as I said, for about 11 months. He went before the committee and sent letters to the committee asking that he be allowed to come before the committee to defend his good name. Eleven months have gone by and he has not yet been given an opportunity to defend his name and his character. On April 21, a hearing was set to bring Dr. Condon before the committee. He was subpenaed to come before this group, notwithstanding that he had expressed in person and by letter his willingness to come before the committee without a subpena. April 21

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

came around and the committee postponed the hearing. Why was the hearing postponed? I know they will come out and say that they could not get the letter.

The committee will probably say, "If we could just get this F.B.I. letter." The gentleman from Pennsylvania stated that he knows what is in the F.B.I. letter and that he already knows what is in it. Part of it was printed, so evidently they must have had access to the letter. I wonder if this is not just an excuse to prevent Dr. Condon from going before the committee and to keep from giving him a chance to put his case before the American people. I challenge this committee to call Dr. Condon before the committee and give him a chance to clear his character. I point out further that Dr. Condon has just recently voluntarily excluded himself from further atomic secrets. Does that sound like a man who is guilty? Does a man who comes before a committee and ask to be heard sound like a man who is fearful of something in his record? He came out in the paper within the last two or three days and said as far as he was concerned he wishes the President would release this letter; that he has nothing to fear in the letter, and as far as he is concerned he would like to have the letter released. He told me that many months ago, and I made a statement on the floor that he did not mind having the letter released.

So it is not because Dr. Condon is fearful of anything that will be turned up against him. But I say that no committee of Congress has a right to take an American citizen and pillory him before the bar of public opinion and constantly refuse to give him a right to defend himself, even though it be a committee of Congress.

Mr. McDOWELL, Republican, Pennsylvania. You asked what do we mean by "the weakest link in the chain." That is easy to answer. It is the link that might first break and destroy the ship.

Mr. HOLIFIELD. Now the gentleman has answered my question. Let me ask the gentleman if you thought that this was the weakest link in the chain of national security and you said in your report that this was a matter of most urgent attention, why did you not call him before you and bring the charges of the weakness of that link and let him answer you?

Mr. McDOWELL. He was subpenaed and something occurred that the committee had nothing to do with.

Mr. HOLIFIELD. He was subpenaed on April 21. This has been going on since March 1947.

Mr. McDOWELL. The man who was most conversant with all these details again became sick. He is a sick man now.

Mr. HOLIFIELD. Had he been sick for 11 months?

Mr. McDOWELL. No. I only know about Dr. Condon since April 1, 1948.

Mr. HOLIFIELD. Dr. Condon was pilloried by the chairman of your committee, I might say to the gentleman, as long ago as March, 1947, in the *American* magazine, and in the following months in *Liberty* magazine, and after that charge was placed against him he asked to be allowed to come before the committee and defend himself, and until this good day he has not been allowed to come before the committee.

Mr. McDOWELL. It must have been a very small stab. As a matter of fact, a pinpoint prick, because I did not know anything about it. I usually know what is going on in the committee.

Mr. HOLIFIELD. Of course, I am not responsible for the gentleman's lack of information on the Condon case.

Mr. McDOWELL. It is not Dr. Condon's loyalty that is questioned here. It is his associations.

Mr. HOLIFIELD. Why did you not bring him before your committee and expose those associations?

Mr. McDOWELL. That is exactly what we are going to do. We are going to present him with 100 pages of a bill of particulars.

Mr. HOLIFIELD. That is just fine. When are you going to do it? Are you going to wait until Congress has adjourned so that no man can rise on the floor and defend him?

Mr. McDOWELL. He will have plenty of chance to defend himself, and it will be before the Congress adjourns.

Mr. HOLIFIELD. I trust the gentleman will give him a chance to come before his committee. I do not know and I do not care

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

whether he is guilty or innocent, but all I ask is fair play for any man who is accused of being disloyal or the weakest link in a chain, or any other charge. I say in the common, ordinary sense of American fair play he deserves the right to defend himself, and that quickly, and not after months and months of delay whereby he is under a cloud of suspicion among his associates and among the people of America. . . . .

Mr. McCORMACK. The gentleman from Oklahoma [Mr. MONRONEY] has called to my attention something I never considered before in connection with this bill and its danger. After the committee has voted to ask for confidential information and the Speaker has approved it, it comes back to the committee and if a majority of the committee votes to make it confidential it becomes confidential and to disclose it becomes a crime. Under that even the minority members of the committee could not file a minority report; and that goes back to interference with the independence of the legislative branch of the government, because when you take away the right of one member of a committee or one member of the House to file a minority report you have taken away the independence of the legislative branch of the government. . . . .

FREE SPEECH

Mr. MONRONEY, Democrat, Oklahoma. I think one of the greatest and most fundamental privileges of a democracy, and certainly in this Congress, is the right of every member of the House to enjoy and exercise freedom of speech on the floor of this House and yet, gentlemen, if you pass this resolution, freedom of speech will pass out of the control of the individual member of this House. It impinges on the right of the member to stand on this floor and discuss intelligently anything that has come before the committee of which he is a member, if under the provisions of section 1, some material has been determined by a majority in control of that committee to be of a confidential nature.

Where is your definition of "confidential?" If section 1 is used, it is only in the minds of the majority members of that committee, whether they be Democrats or whether they be Republicans.

If you want to muzzle the voices of the members of the House on this floor in the future, as the distinguished minority leader has said, today you furnish the weapon to prohibit any minority report when any information has come into any of the committees under the provisions of section 1 of this bill.

You deny the right of any committee member that was sitting on that committee, when the provisions of section 1 of this bill were exercised, to even go to the great Speaker of this House or to the majority leader or the minority leader and disclose to these men in great positions of authority, anything that has come before the committee under the provisions of section 1.

Is that what we wish to do? If it is, then I think we should announce to the world and to this country in particular that we are cutting loose from our idea of democracy and freedom of speech, the power of this great House and the individual responsibility of every member.

Once this bill is passed you have the rule of the majority saying, under section 1, what any member dare disclose in a debate, in a minority report, or in any other way. I for one do not wish to be bound by such a limitation of a committee majority.

Mr. COUDERT, Republican, New York. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MONRONEY. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. COUDERT. I was interested in what the gentleman had to say about the usurpation made in this bill. Does the gentleman deny that one of the most useful and important functions of Congress is the function of investigation, its inquisitorial power?

Mr. MONRONEY. I agree with the gentleman. I think that for 160 years the Congress of the United States under present authority has exercised that and exercised it wisely. I see no reason at this late date, because of some one or two cases, to come in here and modify our whole system of democracy by passing such a bill as this, that will strip away in one action the freedom of speech of the individual members of this House.

Mr. COUDERT. Will the gentleman deny that in view of the enormous growth and power of the executive over the last 15 or 20 years the inquisitorial function of Congress is

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

more important than it has ever been before?

Mr. MONRONEY. I agree with the gentleman. I think if he will read the Legislative Reorganization Act he will find that the committees of Congress were not only given additional staffs but it was made a part of their regular duty to keep legislative surveillance of the departments under them. I say to the gentleman that under our present power and under the precedents that have been set here we can adequately do this job without trampling into the dust the Constitution of the United States. . . . .

Mr. McCORMACK. Mr. Chairman, in view of the remarks made by the distinguished gentleman from New York [Mr. WADSWORTH], I want the RECORD to clearly show that this resolution covers every agency of government. The State Department is created by law passed by the Congress. I pause for any member to show me where the State Department is a constitutional creation. The President of the United States, the executive branch, is established by the Constitution as a separate branch of government. You will find in there "President." You will find that he may ask the opinions of heads of departments, but Congress created the departments. No matter what anyone says, under this bill, if it should become law—and I do not expect it will see the light of day in the Senate—if it should become law, this covers the State Department. It covers the War Department, the Navy Department, the Department of the Air; it covers the Atomic Energy Commission. It covers every agency and department of government. I cannot understand how such a distinguished gentleman as the gentleman from New York [Mr. WADSWORTH], can make the statement that he did, when the language of the bill is as clear, as the old saying which I learned as a youngster, "As clear as the nose on your face."

Mr. MacKINNON. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. McCORMACK. I yield.

Mr. MacKINNON. I think the gentleman overlooks the argument that no bill is effective beyond constitutional limitations, and that the functions to which the gentleman refers in the State Department, the Army, the Navy, the Treasury, and the Attorney General are vested in the executive department by the Constitution.

Mr. McCORMACK. Where?

Mr. MacKINNON. Well, in the Constitution.

Mr. McCORMACK. You show me where there is any such thing as the State Department mentioned in the Constitution.

Mr. MacKINNON. Oh, wait a minute. I said the power.

Mr. McCORMACK. Why, all powers of any agency is in the executive branch, if you want to follow that up.

Mr. MacKINNON. You are twisting the words.

Mr. McCORMACK. Well, I would not do that intentionally.

Mr. MacKINNON. I understand the gentleman would not do that intentionally. The specific power given to the President to "make treaties" and to "appoint ambassadors and other public ministers" is the genesis of the power for the State Department. That power is in the President, conferred specifically by the Constitution. The power conferred by the Constitution upon the President to be Commander in Chief of the Army and the Navy is the genesis of the Army and the Navy Departments.

Mr. McCORMACK. This bill says that "all executive departments and agencies of the Federal Government created by the Congress, and the Secretaries thereof, and all the individuals acting under or by virtue of authority granted said departments and agencies are," and so forth. The State Department is created by the Congress. So is the War Department. Furthermore, the first controversy that arose in Washington's day was in connection with the State Department. That is the first controversy that arose between a President and the Congress or either branch of Congress. It was on the very thing to which the gentleman has himself referred, which he says is excluded.

So those who do not feel this should cover the War Department, the State Department, and some of the other departments, had better put in an amendment excluding them from the operations of this bill, because the language of the bill clearly includes every agency and department of government outside of the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

President of the United States; and that means his own personal office; the President of the United States and the office of the President of the United States. . . . .

Mr. HOFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, those words "created by act of Congress" were inserted by the committee to clarify the meaning, to take the sting out of the charge that the Congress was endeavoring to pry into the business of the President and to make the President subject to congressional action. That is the reason, and the only reason, they were put in. The committee wanted it made clear that there was no intent to trespass upon the President's territory. The gentleman does not distinguish—but the committee does—between offices and officers created by the Congress under the constitutional power granted it and duties created by the Constitution. Over the former we have jurisdiction; over the latter, none.

The amendment is a limitation making clear the intent that Congress does not in any way desire to interfere with the President.

Mr. EBERHARTER. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HOFFMAN. I yield.

Mr. EBERHARTER. Why does not the Committee care to interfere with the office of the President?

Mr. HOFFMAN. What is that?

Mr. EBERHARTER. Why does not the Committee care to interfere with the office of the President?

Mr. HOFFMAN. Because Congress has no right to interfere with it. He holds his office by virtue of the Constitution, the Constitution prescribes his duties, we do not. Does the gentleman want to go down and interfere with him?

Mr. EBERHARTER. The main purpose of this resolution is to interfere with the appointees of the President, is it not?

Mr. HOFFMAN. Appointees; yes, when they exist only because of congressional action, when they conceal from Congress information which is necessary to enable us to legislate, when they draw the cloak of secrecy around actions as they did in the Department of Justice which enabled them to get and keep four Capone gangsters out of jail. Information of that nature is what we are trying to get at.

Mr. EBERHARTER. In other words, you want to interfere with all the employees of the executive department.

Mr. HOFFMAN. No, no, no, no; but the committee claims, I think a majority at least, that if the Congress has the authority to create an office and authority to pay the man who holds it, Congress is at least entitled to know where he spends his time and what he is doing and how he spends the money the Congress gives him to perform his official duties. . . . .

Mr. BROWN. Mr. Chairman, if I may have the attention of the House for about 3 minutes for consideration of this amendment, to which I believe everyone will agree, I understand the chairman of the committee will then make a motion that the Committee rise. If you will refer to page 3, line 10, this amendment simply strikes out the wording which would apply the penalty to persons other than committee members or employees thereof. What the amendment actually does is to make certain that the press of the country, the newspaper and radio men of the Nation, cannot be charged with violation of law if they print information which some member of a congressional committee might give them, and if they accept it in good faith. I do not believe there is any objection to this amendment and I hope it will be adopted.

Mr. SMITH, Democrat, Virginia. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BROWN. I yield to the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. SMITH. I am wondering whether the amendment means anything after you cut out the clause which you propose to cut out, because it applies then only to members of Congress and the committees.

Mr. BROWN. That is right. They are the only ones charged with the responsibility to keep the secret.

Mr. SMITH. It retains the criminal penalty on members of Congress.

Mr. BROWN. And members of the committee.

Mr. SMITH. Members of Congress are protected under the Constitution from prosecution on account of any statement they may make on the floor of the House.

Mr. BROWN. But not off the floor of the House.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mr. SMITH. Let me finish. Members of Congress are protected in two ways: First, from any statements they might make on the floor of the House. They can disclose all of this information in a speech on the floor. In the second place, you cannot prosecute them under this provision because they are exempt from arrest while in attendance of Congress.

Mr. BROWN. The gentleman is too good a lawyer to make that statement, and I am amazed and surprised that he makes it. Do not go out into my State of Ohio and violate a law, whether you are a member of Congress or not, because you will land in the hoosegow. I imagine the same thing would happen in Virginia. It certainly did happen recently to one of our colleagues from another state. I cannot agree with the gentleman's statement, and I know the gentleman did not mean it.

Mr. SMITH. The gentleman knows that members of Congress during sessions of Congress are exempted.

Mr. BROWN. No; only for certain things. The gentleman must read the Constitution again.

Mr. SMITH. I am pretty familiar with that document. The only exemptions are where it is a breach of the peace or a felony. Suppose a member of Congress should make a speech on the floor of the House disclosing that information, certainly the gentleman will agree with me then that you could not prosecute him or do anything with him?

Mr. BROWN. I do not agree with the gentleman, and I do not think the courts would agree with him either. I hope the gentleman is not brought before the bar of judgment and have such a charge against him.

Mr. SMITH. Does the gentleman mean to say a member of this House can be prosecuted for any statement he makes on the floor of the House?

Mr. BROWN. No; certainly not. I am talking about giving information elsewhere. If he gives it publicly on the floor I presume the House would at least censure him for giving out information that is confidential. I doubt that the House of Representatives would permit a member to stand up here and violate this law. . . . .

A bishop was once speaking to a class of boys on the merits of moral courage. "Ten boys were sleeping in a dormitory," he said by way of illustration, "and only one knelt down to say his prayers—that is moral courage." When he had finished the talk, he asked one of the boys to give him an example of moral courage.

"Please, sir, ten bishops were sleeping in a dormitory and only one jumped into bed without saying his prayers!" said one boy.

—*World Christian Digest*

The Dialette, a monthly newspaper at Marquette grade school, Tulsa, Oklahoma, reports that a recent survey of children's favorite radio programs uncovered some unexpected responses. Out of the answers to the survey came the following:

Long ranger. All Rich Family. Taket or leevet. Truth of caneconsis. Feber mege an moley. Baby snexck. Man coed ex. Distekturny. Inner sanketm. Bustry Brown. It pays to be engernt.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FORUM FEATURES

Marian Taylor Abbagnano continues in this issue her study of the Italian people first published in our June number. "The Italians at War" is the third chapter of a book: *Italy and the Italians* which Mrs. Abbagnano is writing in Turin. Mrs. Abbagnano's keen appreciation and sympathetic understanding of the Italian people is as realistic as her exposition of their faults. "The Italians at War" is valuable not only because it is the record of a first-hand observer on the scene but because Mussolini's wall of propaganda had cut us off from the Italian people. We accepted, in the days of our isolation and the "phony war," the glib theory of the struggle between the "haves and the have-nots." Our lack of information and understanding made us swallow Mussolini's bombast and our ensuing judgments have been unnecessarily harsh. Mrs. Abbagnano corrects our perspective.

Victoria Schuck, Professor of Political Science at Mount Holyoke College, and former Chief Program Analyst of the O.P.A., concludes the history of Public Law 395, the inflation control act passed by the Eightieth Congress, which she began in September. Congress, as you may not remember, decided on the principle of voluntary control by industry instead of mandatory control by government. Little information on the success or failure of this program has been available in the public press. Miss Schuck's detailed description of the voluntary agreements worked out with industry by the Commerce Department throws light on the running debate over voluntary vs. compulsory methods of controlling inflation.

In all the jockeying and catcalling that accompanied the Special Session of the Eightieth Congress, the deep political significance of Mr. Truman's action was lost. Ellen Deborah Ellis, Professor Emeritus of Political Science at Mount Holyoke College, calls our attention to the constitutional potentialities inherent in the Special Session which seem to have been missed by the President, the Congress, and the public.

No issue before the American public has aroused such ire as the investigating powers of Congressional committees. President Truman publicly rebuked the House Committee on Un-American Activities by refusing to release the "Condon letter" from his files. In "Congress Debates: Investigating Powers" we see that this conflict between Congress and the Executive goes back to Washington's day. The implications of a reversal of the historic prerogative of the Executive to secrecy is made painfully clear in the House debate.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED